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**SEALED AND
DELIVERED**

Books by

G. L. STEER

CÆSAR IN ABYSSINIA

THE TREE OF GERNIKA

JUDGMENT ON GERMAN
AFRICA

A DATE IN THE DESERT

SEALED AND DELIVERED

HODDER & STOUGHTON

SEALED AND DELIVERED

A Book on the
Abyssinian Campaign

BY

G. L. STEER

HODDER AND STOUGHTON
LIMITED LONDON

First printed July 1942



**THE TYPOGRAPHY AND BINDING OF
THIS BOOK CONFORMS TO THE
AUTHORISED ECONOMY STANDARD**

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PREFACE

THIS book by the author of *Cæsar in Abyssinia* tells the story of the nemesis which five years later overtook the Italians in the Abyssinian campaign of 1941. This time George Steer was not following the campaign as a journalist, but was participating in it in the capacity of a British Intelligence Officer in charge of Offensive Propaganda. Having spent the interval between his expulsion from Addis Ababa by the Italians in 1936 and Mussolini's declaration of war on the Allies in 1940 as a War Correspondent in Spain and Finland, he may be said to have been at the front in the Second World War ever since this began in fact with the Italian invasion of Abyssinia on 1 October 1935.

With such a background one is prepared for a modern and realist approach to his subject, and that part of the campaign with which the book deals, namely the attack on the Italian armies by Imperial forces from the Sudan acting in co-operation with the Abyssinian troops who rallied to the Emperor's standard, provides the chronicler not only with the romance which still clings to the primitive warrior but also with a sand-table exercise in the use of that most modern of weapons, the propaganda arm, which has earned for itself a place in the front line with loud-speaker and printing press.

The Emperor, accompanied by the author, left England by air for the Sudan in June 1940 and we follow the fortunes of one of the most patient of sovereigns through the inevitable set-backs and disappointments of war until he re-enters his capital of Addis Ababa on 5 May 1941 on the fifth anniversary of the Italian entry. Here the story breaks off, for the author and the handful of British officers, who with the backing of a few hundred magnificent Sudanese of the Sudan Defence Force had achieved the double task of fanning and co-ordinating internal Abyssinian resistance to the Italian garrison in order to diminish the latter's capacity

to resist the British attack, made way for the officials of the Occupied Enemy Territory Administration, who were to present for ultimate solution the major problem of Who was the ruler of Ethiopia?

Unless the right solution were furnished of this problem, the value of one of the most striking successes in any war would be seriously impaired, for once again the British word would be doubted and the enemy's propaganda would benefit. But "we had made promises which we were bound to redeem," and the date of the redemption appears to be drawing near as this book goes to press.

With the close of the rains in October operations were resumed against Gondar and in November the last Italian stronghold surrendered, thus bringing to an end a campaign which had lasted less than a year and in which the Imperial Forces, never using more than 20,000 troops and 68 guns at any one time, had put out of action some 200,000 Italian troops and liberated over 500,000 square miles of territory. The contribution made by the Abyssinian Patriot troops to this result forms the principal theme of the book, and there were in addition other contributions by the Refugee and Patriot Units in the southern areas which are not included in its scope.

Corresponding progress has also been made in the solution of the political problem and in January 1942 it was announced in the Press that an agreement had been reached which would place beyond doubt the independence and integrity of Ethiopia under the Emperor Haile Sellassie, the first of the victims of aggression to be restored to his lawful throne. The Court Circular has already announced the appointment of an Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary of His Majesty in Abyssinia and it only remains for confirmation of the signature of the new Treaty to be announced in Parliament.

It is this symbolic side of the campaign in Abyssinia which grows ever more important as the scope of the war extends and which, by convincing friend and foe alike that Britain keeps her word to all victims of aggression without distinction of race or size, will do more to justify the claim of the demo-

cracies to be fighting for freedom than any reiteration of war aims in the abstract.

No more striking example of this could be furnished than appeared in a recent speech by General Smuts, Prime Minister of the Union of South Africa, in the course of which he referred to the fact that great mutual respect had grown up between the South African troops and the native troops in the course of the campaign in the north, and hailed this as a good basis giving hope for racial co-operation in the future.

Even in the third year of the second World War there are remnants of the Colonial and Colour-bar minds capable of delaying the recognition of racial equality as an essential concomitant of freedom, but these will find no encouragement in Mr. Churchill's telegram of October 1941 to the Emperor Haile Sellassie reading, "I beg Your Majesty not to be distressed at the delay attached to the signing of the Treaty.¹ The delay arises because the British Government wishes nothing to exist in the Treaty which could be interpreted as binding to your sovereign rights or to the independence of Ethiopia."

S. BARTON.

LONDON,
January 1942.

¹ See Appendix at p. 213.

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Chapter I

ROBERT MONNIER

THERE will never be another Monnier. I first saw him drawing red lines on a map in Bilbao during the Spanish Civil War. A plump little figure in his leathern jerkin, with the Légion d'Honneur in the button-hole, a beret ajaunt over his laughing but steely blue eyes and a Gernika pistol strapped to his full waist, he jumped from front to front. He led reconnaissances and arrested retreats, though he had no command. He exposed himself alarmingly. Monnier was always the last to go, with a caustic remark about the command and the troops and the cause, though he liked the third and pitied the second. In the cannonade Monnier tinkled with fun. In the council chamber he loved to shock the dear Christian Basques. "Monsieur Aguirre," he said to the Basque President, "in war you have to shoot people; if you cannot shoot the enemy, then you must shoot some on your own side." Of course it was all nonsense. Monnier was humane. He liked the spirit, the energy, the vivacity of man, and would have slaughtered cheerfully only the colossal cohorts of the dumb. I used to follow Monnier around like a dog because he always knew the smartest sectors of the front. In the evening I read his crisp hand-written reports to the President, laid with a flawless rapidity on flimsies, to prepare which Monnier put on a most impressive blue eyeshade and worked in his shirt-sleeves past midnight in brilliant artificial light. One of his qualities was that you never saw him tired, even next morning, and never untidy, even in that uncomfortable siege. In this he resembled the bird on the bough which suddenly wakes up, stretches its neck, pulls a feather into place and is all set to sing or chase flies forthwith.

Monnier was therefore one of my dearest friends, and it was natural that when I returned from Africa to Paris in May 1939 I should meet him again. Esmé and I were going to get married, and we were meeting in Paris that month

to talk it over—and very sensible and right we found it. Monnier walked in on us full of his adventures in Barcelona: the enthusiasm and the incompetence; the Fascists nervously feeling their way into the town; parting shots—Monnier always liked to poke his nose round the corner or over the roof and give them a quick one; the Mexican dancer with a kick and castanets—Monnier raised his short coat above his ample behind and did a loving imitation of her action.

By arrangement, Lorenzo Tazaz was in Paris at the time. He was our Press chief in Addis during the Ethiopian war and later, in exile, became the Ethiopian representative at the League, wrestling with assorted angels like Lord Halifax and M. Bonnet. At Marignane's they were introduced. Lorenzo, lively Eritrean, was sick of sitting around in boarding-houses, London W.2, wondering when the bill was paid where to get the next stamp to send a letter to the Secretariat. Monnier needed a bit of fun in the tropics, and wanted to serve his country in the inevitable war against Italy. So they made a complot with me, and next day Monnier led me to a certain Ministry where I was palmed off as the principal surviving expert on Abyssinia and an intimate (which I have always longed to be) of the shadier characters of the British War Department (which unfortunately has none). On that Monnier, a born wirepuller, got enough francs to put Lorenzo and himself into the Sudan. I was to pull strings—purse strings—in London, and follow. But I am a vacillating type and got married instead, and anyway the gentleman whom I used to visit with a request for a permit to enter Abyssinia through the Sudan looked stealthily at the blotter and said that the F.O. had not yet agreed. I suppose that it was his way of saying *Take a risk*; but the risk that I took was marriage.

Lorenzo went off dressed in a tarboosh, saying that he was a Sudanese of the Eritrean frontier tribe of the Habab. His timing was good. If I remember, the League did not sit that year and in that summer we all went a bit native. Monnier on the other hand had himself measured for a white "smoking" and told the people of the Sudan how much game he would fell when his friend Steer arrived.

His friend Steer was now one of the world's greatest shots. Monnier and Lorenzo went by train from Khartoum to Gedaref, where they lurked in a hut to avoid the District Commissioner, were off on camels before the break of day, and at length found themselves at the river Gwang or Atbara which was coming down at a fair lick and took away one of their men. Their next plan was to build a ferry. They sent back to Khartoum for nails. Then they differed, as active people stupidly do when they sit on their haunches; and they parted. Monnier taught Lorenzo how to handle a compass, and Lorenzo went off south, crossed the frontier through deserted bush below the Italian fort at Metemma, and broke straight into the Gojjam, which was his main objective.

The Gojjam was in a state of steady, quiescent, typically Ethiopian revolt in 1939; huge areas of the rich cultivable uplands refused to accept the Italian. Two years before the Ethiopian had gone up like a volcano under his feudal leaders, Dedjasmatches Mangasha and Nagash, and under survivors of the Emperor's old civil service such as the man whom he had sent to Dangila to put down the slave trade in the Gojjam, crooked-faced, straight-hearted and often stiff-necked Gila Giorghis. That volcano permanently simmered, and Lorenzo's coming gave it a poke. He poked it all round, east and west, north and south, in Gojjam and Armacheho, and brought back the map of his pokings to me when he returned to England in March 1940. His journey was of the utmost value to us. We knew that this would be the only port of entry for the Emperor when Italy declared war. But we did not know until Lorenzo returned what a warm reception he would get from the chiefs and people of Gojjam, always believed by us to be separatist. "Prostrate before your throne, kissing the earth at your feet. . . ." their letters began.

And Monnier? He sat on the left bank of the Gwang waiting for the flood to subside and bitten nightly by the most pernicious kind of mosquito. Then he crossed, burdened with fever, into Armacheho. The last letters that I received from him were written in the same neat, small, round hand that pictured his person, and on the same

flimsies that he used two and a half years back in Bilbao. In the hilly desert country of Armacheho, where some time back the Abyssinian patriots had destroyed an Italian colonial brigade and had stood in stagnant revolt ever since, Monnier came to Aussa. He wrote a few reports on Italian dispositions and armament, but the fever was too strong for him. He died on 11 November, getting terribly thin and quite unlike the robin fighter of Bilbao towards the end. Abba Qirqos, the rebel priest with the luminous soft eyes and the rasping word of God in every sentence, buried him at Aussa, crusted in the decorations that they found in his luggage. So there made his entry into the earth of Africa my friend Robert Monnier, formerly *chef de bataillon* of *Chasseurs Alpins*, veteran (and pretty youthful at that) of the Great, the Moroccan and the Spanish Wars, once Radical-Socialist municipal councillor of Paris and a leader of French ex-servicemen, supporter of the *Front Populaire* and the *Frente Popular*, agent of French armament firms and of the *2ème Bureau*, who made a fine art of the risking of his own skin. He must have been furious that he had to die of fever. It cannot have done his temperature any good at all. Monnier, wherever I go, I think of you. You pretended to have no political morals, and yet you stood, laughing, for the most moral of causes. Your talent could have made you pots of money fighting for our common enemy; but you proffered your life unprofitably away for the good of the common man, whom most of the time you ridiculed. Above all, you were unquenchably brave and cheerful. When I look at the image of you that—something like a Cheshire Cat—hangs above me in the sky, and then at the Petainist of today, I wonder how you could have been a Frenchman. They must have been a great race. Adventurer, this book in which our first plan is shown to have been executed is dedicated to you; the rest will follow. It will indeed be a bore when there are no more fields to conquer and correct, when justice has triumphed everywhere and we lie in soggy satisfaction each on his own hearthrug, like old dogs moulting and going blind. Perhaps you already have the laugh on us, pulling subtler strings up there in the heavenly choir.

Chapter II

FIVE YEARS HARD

MY recollections are shared by very few. I know none but a few Armenians and Syrians—and a lot of Ethiopians, of course—who can span 5 May 1936 to 5 May 1941 with so theatrical a bridge of memories as I can. In any case, Armenians and Syrians would not think of it in that way because their shops were being burned down in 1936, and Ethiopians get first too excited and then too stunned by the abnormal. Of all the objectivists who were there on the date in 1941 only Andrew was anywhere near in 1936, and in Harrar where he was vice-consul the fun was more limited. We two were the remains of an old brigade who saw eye to eye in the principal matter of requiting the Italian. I got as near as I cared to the mustard gas. In Harrar, where he had the opportunity to study events from a more intimate official angle, he had found the civilised Italian killing Abyssinians by shooting them up the backside.

I must admit that I never was in love with the Italians, though I tried my best to give them a fair start in life. To begin with, it mattered little to me, who did not care if the whole thing went off the rails at eighty, that Mussolini had taught the Italian train to discharge its ugly load of Anglo-Saxon tourists with a punctuality unknown to Mazzini, Garibaldi and all the other great Wops whom we invoke in our propaganda. Next, I was educated with some care at Oxford University, where we learned to whistle and to rasp-berry when the revolting chin under the ludicrous plume or in the effeminate toque (officially called the Fascist Fez) obliterated the grander sights of Rome on the screen of the Oxford Super Cinema. When I chose to think along serious political lines, I could find no acceptable place in the twentieth century of Christianity for a system which castor-oiled people who did not agree with it and then murdered them or sent them to desert islands, which told the Universi-

ties exactly what they could teach and the printers what they could print and the journalists what they could write, and so turned the Italian race into the herd of mutton-headed runaways that we found them to be at Sidi Barrani, Tobruk and Addis Ababa.

There were minor personal elements to confirm my disapproval of the Italian in his modern armature. There was the fat Italian who, when I visited Italy, in a train that was running with incredible punctuality, came down the corridor in a silly Robin Hood hat with a feather over his ear and fined me 50 lire for having my feet, with shoes, upon the opposite cushion. There was the other Italian who, when I took my shoes off and replaced my feet on the opposite cushion, protested at such an indecent act because he was so refined. Finally, there was the dwarf police chief at Taormina who sat beneath a colossal portrait of Mussolini and two in passport size of the King and Queen of Italy, and tried to hector me because a fourth Italian had stolen my passport and my money in the train where I had spent the night in sitting misery because of Italian police and dudes who objected to a British pair of feet.

That, you may think, was a trivial experience; but it was not. It typified the spirit of Fascist interference and the basic fragility of Italy today. On the one side there are people who cannot bear the indelicate sight of feet in the best circles; on the other a set of minor bullies and thieves, imitating the major bully and thief. All these people, the soft- and the strong-arm men, were nevertheless convinced that Italy was a military nation, that contracts were made to be broken, that peace sprouted from eight million bayonets, that ice-cream needed a place in the sun, and a lot of other contradictions in terms.

So they made the Ethiopian war, which I observed from Addis Ababa. With the aid of others, they dealt that resounding blow to the system of collective security which unseated it. Resounding is the operative word: Mussolini frightened civilisation into the abandonment of its most modern line of defences by rude noise alone; at the first blast of his paper bag he drove us behind the inadequate

concrete of Maginot. So facile a victory, however, did not mean that the wretched people of Ethiopia did not have to suffer, and that the surfacing scum of modern Italy did not discover in the enjoyment of their sufferings a rare æsthetic quality. The future Foreign Minister, son-in-law of the Duce, himself described in an interview to the international Press the pleasures of bombing Ethiopian villages and troops who were unprovided with A.A. or fighter defence. He painted his sensations like an artist. Vittorio Mussolini wrote a book sweet with the same sadism. The Italians used photography as well as literature to convey the sensational joy that acts of atrocity gave them. On numerous prisoners, officers or Blackshirts, during our own Ethiopian campaign we found pictorial souvenirs of the scenes which they had witnessed: an Italian soldier standing guard over a mass of dead Ethiopian civilians after the Graziani massacre of February 1937; six Ethiopians swinging on a gibbet; proud owner sticking a bayonet into an Ethiopian corpse or pointing a knife at a severed Ethiopian head; another severed head of an Ethiopian patriot, executed at Debra Brehan, being carried round on a plate with his severed right hand set alongside the head in a mock salute. The modern Italian specialised in this sort of thing. This was the filthy level to which a sham military system had perverted the æstheticism of the Italian people, expressed before in painting, architecture and music of a less obnoxious kind. The Italian genius has always led the race in the direction of refinement; under Fascism, to the refinement of cruelty to weaker, that is non-European, peoples. We saw the sickening prelude to this in the use of mustard gas in 1936.

Therefore when I led the Imperial procession into Addis Ababa on 5 May 1941 in a loudspeaker van rigged up by Signals for the day, I could not help remembering that other 5 May five years back when Taylor, Don Lee and I stood at the Legation gates on the Dessie road after four days of sack and watched the dusty conquering procession rumble in. At the foot of the mountains Addis Ababa still reeked of fire and was sprinkled with corpses. Behind us the Armenians and Syrians paddocked under the Legation

guard were in their secular state of wind. There was a Union Jack on the Legation gate, about which I must have felt rather dramatic because I stood alongside it carrying a tommy-gun, a weapon that I did not know how to handle. First the little tanks went by (military Italy was using the same tinpot CV3 tanks five years later); then the international Press; then Badoglio and his staff looking rather big for their cars, like the necks of bookmakers overswelling their collars; and then the great stream of Italian lorries. After the speeches of Sir Samuel Hoare and the expectations of 1935 this was a humiliation. One of the Italian lorry-drivers, sighting the Union Jack on our gate, appropriately put out of his mouth that member by which Italy had defeated us. Others made tenor booing noises. We could take it, deep under the skin. At the former Italian Legation Marshal Badoglio's son ran up the Italian flag and his father in a brief address pronounced its position to be permanent. Then the Italians began to bump off the Abyssinians whom they found with arms, and some found without arms. Four days later they declared the Italian Empire at a parade where a large number of troops lost their step and dropped their rifles, and their artillery irritated Sir Sidney Barton by firing ceremonial blank over the British Legation roof into the flanks of Mount Entoto.

One day, I felt as they expelled me, you will get the punishment that you deserve for your impertinence to the greatest imperial race in the world. Fat Tasfai Teguegne, the former Director of the Ethiopian Foreign Office, whom they had already trained to do the Fascist salute to all Italian whites, was near the station when we left. It was a hateful thing that he had cause to look apprehensive as I went up to him. "Don't you worry, Ato Tasfai," I said to this large but shrinking friend, "we will return, this is not the end." For five years I worked with my pen and a few days with my body to keep my promise. There were moments when the cards seemed to be stacked against us. England and France combined to try to drive Ethiopia out of the League. As Ethiopia stuck in the League, the League was found to be a nonsensical organisation. Any Italian propaganda about Ethiopia and

the Ethiopians was believed, and anything that the Ethiopians said was propaganda. A Gentleman's Agreement gave recognition to the biggest cad of modern times. Right up to May 1940 there were wise men in England who said that the Italians would never come out against us if we made a few concessions to their blackmail, and added as a sort of corollary to this that the Italian army was very different from that of 1916, so it would be foolish to range it against us in this grave crisis. Though all was on the side of the Devil and the diplomats, I, however, never weakened in the stupid conviction that I would one day see Great Britain, redeeming her failure of 1935-6, establish in the watery mountains and great divides of Ethiopia the restoration in prototype of the liberties of the globe.

Chapter III

HAILE SELLESSIE AT THE HOTEL

ON 8 June 1940 I saw for the last time St. Paul's Cathedral intact. Esmé had borne me a son, and we had him christened under the dome. Dunkirk was over; thus it moved one to see, beyond the font, in smooth and massive stone, the monument to Sir John Moore drooping in the glory of Corunna among the flags, the muskets and the guardian angels of the nation. The Emperor Haile Sellassie, who had known Esmé's people for years, was a godfather and hung a gold cross round the child's neck in his quiet kingly way and patted it on the head with a friendliness that dictators would do well to study between fits of dynamism and bad temper. Then he and Sidney, Philip Noel Baker and myself withdrew into the Canon's study to discuss plans. War with Italy was quite inevitable. The students of Rome had completed their latest Latin exercise by posting anti-British bills and beating, when they had a superiority of fire power of a hundred to one, innocuous and if anything pro-Fascist Britons. Mussolini had declared that Italy's position of slavery in the Middle Sea was intolerable. France was galloping to collapse, a condition in which even the Italian High Command believed that, with German aid, they could defeat her. We asked the Emperor what he had done about it. He had written a letter to the Foreign Secretary, Lord Halifax, saying that he was ready to act; but there was no reply. The other three of us were agreed that if Italy went to war one of our principal weapons in East Africa would be an Ethiopian revolt, and that the only leader for this would be the Emperor. This was not because we liked him (as we did), nor because we felt an overriding loyalty towards him. We were not "Apostles," as a later administrator in East Africa described us. We based our opinion on the known facts of Lorenzo's visit to Gojjam and Monnier's to Armacheho, and on the reports of the Italian anti-Fascist Paul who after a sojourn of a year

with the Ethiopian patriots came back to Europe with Lorenzo. We acted with the subsequent approval of those British who had known anything about Abyssinia—Sandford, who had been there for nearly fifteen years, and the former consuls Robert Cheesman and Andrew Chapman-Andrews.

The alternatives would have been to give the revolt no leadership at all, in which case we would have thrown away a valuable weapon even if the revolt had been as latent as most Ethiopian revolts have a habit of becoming; and the British people would have been embarrassed how to deal with Abyssinia afterwards. Or we could have set up a leader of our own choice. The French in Djibouti, before their high spirits were diluted with Vichy, had polished a sceptre for Ras Ababa Aragai, a former chief of police of Addis Ababa who still defied the Italians eighty miles from his old official beat. To have played kingmaker to any one Ethiopian would have riled every other Ethiopian chief and have turned the revolt into an Ethiopian civil war. The Italians would have been able to divert against the Sudan and Kenya the troops that they needed for internal security. A policy of this kind would have made our campaign invidious in the eyes of the world. We had to go in with clean hands and without territorial designs—so, at least, we three believed.

The negative arguments against Haile Sellassie, on the other hand, we knew to be based on Italian propaganda and frontier prejudice. The Abyssinian, rightly or wrongly, is not popular with the colonial British who rule the countries round him. His habits make them see red over their pink gin. Very few of them could share the sentiments of anti-war felt by their metropolitan cousins in 1935–6, for the life of the colonial British is aristocratic and unreal and free from bombs except the occasional home-made kind once made in Egypt, which the colonial British have learned to support with the same fortitude as leg-theory in cricket. For the majority of the colonial British the two questions of collective security and the implementation of our word to Ethiopia meant nothing. The Italians would probably be better neighbours. The Maffey Report of 1935 mirrored

the mind of these short-term thinkers, who after the Italian conquest settled down to friendly relations with the people across the border. The colonial British were therefore ready to swallow the whole of Italian propaganda, in the distribution of which the Italians are socially adept. Part of this propaganda was that the Emperor Haile Sellassie was hated by his people: because he had run away with a great deal of money; because his government was corrupt and cruel; because Ethiopia was a collection of oppressed tribes and jealous overlords, each one of whom wanted to be Emperor. The tide of this propaganda came pouring like Niagara off the Italian presses and the Italian dinner tables. In London it was polite and convenient to believe it. These then were the obstructions that we had to overcome within a few days; if we did not move fast an irrevocable decision would be taken *in vacuo* and the affair would be lifted out of our hands.

We recommended that the Emperor should write another letter to the Foreign Secretary, and told him—for he was in a cautious mood—that he had allies: the people, once the facts were known and I could make them known; two and a quarter of the parties in a united Parliament, and a part of the Cabinet, now that Mr. Chamberlain was no longer Prime Minister.

The Emperor stayed up in town at the Great Western Hotel, and we agreed to meet again at my house on Monday, 10 June. Philip would meanwhile get to work among the politicians.

On Monday afternoon I turned on the wireless. It announced that Mussolini would be at war with Great Britain and France from a given hour the following morning. Even while he and it were talking, R.A.F. Middle East were preparing to bomb the aerodromes of Cyrenaica and the oil-tanks of Massawa.

The others came in after dinner. We wasted no time on discussion. The Emperor had his dossier of loyal letters from Abyssinia ready. The possible opponents of the policy of sending the Emperor back to Abyssinia were enumerated,

and we laid plans for dealing with them. The great thing on these occasions is to know your *men*, not to develop your abstract arguments.

Philip at once saw Mr. R. A. Butler, the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, with whom he fixed an interview for the Emperor three days later. I do not know what passed at the London house of Mr. —, M.P., but the Emperor was pleased, and that was good enough; the little man is not easily spoofed, nor is to-spoof in the character of Mr. Butler, so there was a double assurance. I meanwhile played the honest reporter and used to call at the Foreign Office on Tommy Thompson, the head of whatever submerged and strangled sub-section of a department dealt with that deplorable half-forgotten event known as Abyssinia. Tommy Thompson is a tough character, and often fails to create a good impression because he doesn't try. I had classed him before as pro-Italian where Abyssinia was concerned, but found him all out for totalitarian war against Mussolini and convinced that anybody not likeminded was a damned Fifth Columnist and a member of the Link. He still growled a little when the Emperor came up, but he was prepared to give the little man a try; went round to the Great Western Hotel and in his sepulchral unconciliatory way gave him the shivers as well. But somehow or other Tommy Thompson and I hitched together on the basis of a memorandum on Ethiopia which I was asked to write for the Under-Secretary. Tommy underplayed my hand. He said that he did not believe for one minute that if the Emperor returned the country would rise as one man and chuck the Italian out. I invited him to read the memorandum again, and he would see that I had not said that; I had said that the Emperor would be the best available leader for Ethiopia. He agreed, and thenceforward the conspiracy progressed.

Sidney stood in his rightful place, as he had stood through four years of exile on the one hand and retirement on the other, at the little man's side. Sidney has a remarkable Irish temper into which he once flew during this negotiatory fortnight. Taczaz had written a Note for the little man which began "Now that the die is cast . . .," because

Taezaz remains a bit of a journalist. The damned fools, they've wrecked the only chance they had, said Sidney, shaking the copy like a rat; and he went round to the Great Western Hotel to give the little man in the presence of his secretaries a fearful wiggling. After that they were instructed—yes, instructed—to bring everything to Sidney for approval. They took it just as they would take anything from Sidney, who gave not a damn for career and his whole career for honour.

The time was now arrived when Major C. took a hand. Sometimes he was in uniform and sometimes out, and sometimes he had another name; but in the end we all got him affectionately pinned in the sum of his disguises. C. particularly appealed to Taezaz, who as I have said once wore a tarboosh. I was told by C. that I had been appointed a G.S.O.3 in Cairo and that after the Imperial voice had been recorded in two speeches, one to his chiefs and the other to his fighting men, I would fly with the Emperor to the Sudan. The great ones in Middle East and the Sudan were to expect Haile Sellassie when they saw him. The Emperor, who is not given to warlike thunder, uttered his remarks dryly with an occasional stammer in the hushed bowels of a studio. C. went off and ordered a large lunch at Fortnum & Mason's, champagne, lobster, caviare, foie gras and everything else that's good, which we secreted in the larder.

There were last-minute delays when France packed in, and we had to think of a new route. Those days C. cunningly padded with Daimlers which, hired for the little man, swept up to the Great Western Hotel at any odd hour, gave him an airing and returned him; repeat.

Zero hour arrived. It was 24 June, another Monday. Mr. Winston Churchill had sent a friendly non-committal letter. It was sunny. I went round to Sidney and Winifred to say good-bye, but they were out. The fish in the shop in Old Brompton Road looked very good, in miniature imaging the idle balloons in the sky above. The new brick shelters looked as if they would never be used. Life was normal; there were still flowers for sale; the midday news-bills echoed

some dull sensation. I came back to Esmé. There were some policemen in the street. I love Esmé, therefore it is odd that I cannot remember what I said to her that day, or she to me, except that there would be a wire from Alex; but we were a long time together over my 15 kilos of packing for the flying-boat. She quite frankly hated my going and said that I would never get other countries out of my head. But there it was, one day we would meet again. Then about midday one looked through the flowers in the casement window and there they were arriving, and May the maid quite dumbfounded. The little man in a black hat; his second son Prince Makonnen, who had left Wellington in the middle of the term; Lorenzo and Wolde Giorghis, the two secretaries; C. The secretaries were very late as they had been pushing small parcels of luggage out of various doors of the Great Western during the morning, no single one of which was to be a size to cause suspicion in the breast of the hotel staff. We lunched without them on the superb spread that staggered the hands of May, who was just saved from a diplomatic contretemps of the most dangerous kind, as she came forward with the Imperial dessert plates looted from the Palace at Addis Ababa in May 1936 and given to us as a wedding present in 1939. Esmé controlled her distress; there were gaseous toasts; I said good-bye to a wrinkled inarticulate son shaded by a perambulator in the back yard. The Emperor, the boy and C. went in the front car, the secretaries and I in the second, and my job for about eight hours was to look behind and see if we were being followed by any waiter from Soho. By the end of that we had lost our way twice because all the signposts were down, and after another bottle of champagne upon the Wiltshire Downs while a country lad cycled whistling by we were at Plymouth. By 10 p.m. our Short Sunderland had lifted off the grey water at the second effort, we were circling heavily over a small part of the French fleet and then headed for the pearly southern haze that rolled in to cover our last glimpse of the sturdy coast of Britain. My final interpretable sight of my own country was another memorial, that to God's winds and the heroes who broke the Invincible Armada.

The scene was so peaceful that I could not foresee the breaking of another, boosted to be a world-beater, in the coming summer months.

And if I had known that I left my wife to be defended by one fully equipped brigade of foot and a hundred guns, I would not have been so cockahoop as the plane lifted into darkness.

Chapter IV

CARDS ON THE TABLE

WE rose very high into the night, and made west of Ushant to Bordeaux, whose government of defeat was to initial the terms of the Franco-German armistice within the next twenty-four hours. It was an icy and uncomfortable return from exile for a monarch who had been abroad four years. So secret were the preparations for the flight that even the chief pilot, Menzies, did not know whom or even how many he was going to carry. There was hardly any food or drink aboard. The Emperor dosed down in his greatcoat on a bunk forward, and the secretaries half-way back within comforting sight of the quadruple Browning gun-turret. I lay down in a fleabag on the bitterly cold metal floor under the anti-submarine bombs, and in my struggle for sleep set my imagination moving and began to twitter gently with fear. Below us the Germans were hopping over French aerodromes like halma-men, but cloud curtained us off from them and an electric storm played around us, ripping the velvet of the night sky and icing our wing surfaces and dancing us like a pea on a drum. So we were safe (though nobody told me so) over Bordeaux and Marseilles, whence we pointed south for Tunisia. Someone reported that there were Italian fighters out for us in the Sicilian straits, and for that reason we arched over Africa. I woke from a night of appalling cold and funk to find the sun brightening the same striped uplands of Tunisia that I had travelled alone at my horse's pace a year before. There was Maktar, and the now colourless plateau where we had brushed through blue, scarlet, purple and sulphur of a thousand packed wild flowers in the spring, and halted to graze by the pompous tombs of provincial Roman magistrates. This was to be one of the bastions of democratic defence in the Middle East, but the French had withered with their country garlands. An unknown aircraft hovered over the Mediterranean on our port beam, then

veered away. Judged by the manœuvre, it was probably an Italian. Circling over aerodromes which Italian bombs had missed by 400 yards and whence tiny brown figures waved hands, we touched down on the glassy blue off Malta to refuel at eight, and by four in the afternoon we were at Alex. A boat chuffed out of the harbour between the pale walls of another immobilised French fleet, and in it as it drew abreast I saw the philosophic face of Clayton, who had enlisted me, and the sharper features of Andrew Chapman-Andrews, whom I had last known when we waited for Graziani in his Harrar consulate with three American journalists who spent most of their time looking for gin because they could not find stories. In these early days of 1940, I recall with some shame, we eyed each other rather foxily, wondering which was to be the new Lawrence. The little man chafed within the aircraft till dark, when we smuggled him ashore past the Egyptian police and into the former Italian boating club near the Palace. He had his first square meal in a room from which portraits of Mussolini, canned to Fascist taste in an Italian steel helmet, had been hustled to the lavatory walls.

Next morning we were at Wadi Halfa, where the surprised Government of the Sudan kept us for a week wondering what on earth they were to do with us. Andrew went south to tackle the pro-consuls. We filled a week of mental inactivity in the dry oasis of Wadi Halfa with shandy, and Charlie Kunz on the radiogram, and with journeys in the hotel launch along the Nile to the ebony shining cataract, to the little temple where Thothmes and his brilliant sister sat among fallen pillars in the unaltered dignity of bas-relief, and to the still smaller cell of a Coptic church, the oldest in these parts, where we held lamps against the wind and in the rushing twilight to faint dreamy daubs of the Saints on horseback and of the Christian Nubian king crowned with horns. The Emperor gazed in long fascination at these first traces of his people's religion. And we took tea in a remote palm garden under a Dervish fort as the river glided by. But he remembered always that the water came from Abyssinia. His patience found something to master it only

on the 28th, when Colonel Sandford arrived with Andrew from Khartoum as representative of the Kaid, as the British general commanding troops in the Sudan is styled.

Dan was an old friend. Myopic, optimistic, hairy and hale, the son of a Canon of Exeter, he had come out to Abyssinia in the early 'twenties after a career in the gunners (D.S.O. and bar) and in the Sudanese political service. Here he and his remarkable wife bred, clad and educated a numerous brood, and Dan ran Companies, performed in the Mixed Courts, wrote for *The Times* and the *Daily Telegraph*, broke in horses, went to communion on Sunday and had eggs and bacon with the Padre afterwards, grew strawberries and plums on a farm overhanging a tributary of the Blue Nile, sold jam in Addis Ababa, rode long distances ahead of his caravan and slept alone under haystacks, walked booted into the Emperor's study to shake hands and to talk. All-rounder would be too flashy a term for Dan, odd-job-man too pejorative. But he developed that finger in every pie which was the mark of every European in the old ramshackle Abyssinia, and in the end he could cheerfully square any circle. In 1935 he went down from Addis Ababa to Maji in south-western Abyssinia to advise the new Ethiopian governor there, with whom he escaped from the Italians next year. For a long time he was very hard up, but his spirit and his wife's carried the family through. Dan would never have stood shoulder to shoulder with Henley in a heroic resistance to the bludgeonings of fate. His bald head had a rubber cover from which the weapon bounced; while she, one of the most impressive of Saxon matrons, saw that the children got their scholarships. At last Dan found a niche in the British economic system as secretary of the Guildford Cathedral Building Fund, from which he was taken down and re-colonelled at the outbreak of war in 1939 to undertake Ethiopian intelligence and the preparation of revolt. Starting from scratch, he had by now drafted a scheme for the whole thing to go off in three bangs (which he modestly described as phases) and he had just been visiting the Ethiopian chiefs from Armacheho who had gathered in reply to a message from the Kaid to collect arms at Gallabat.

He was himself earmarked at fifty-eight years of age to lead a certain secret Mission 101 into the Gojjam, along the tracks blazed by Lorenzo.

The different Lawrences shook hands with each other and the Emperor, and that afternoon after shandy we sat down to a conference.

There were the Emperor, Dan, Andrew, Lorenzo, Wolde Giorghis and myself, who took the notes. Dan slapped his files cheerfully upon the table and began to speak.

First he described the situation of the patriot movement in Ethiopia. It existed in the Amharic area, and was strongest in Gojjam, Armacheho and Begemder (the country round Gondar). This was the zone to which the Kaid had already sent his letters offering arms to those who would come to the Sudan and fetch them. There was also revolt in Shoa, east of Addis Ababa, but this was for the French to feed from Djibouti, which still remained loyal to us under General Le Gentilhomme.

Then the material and the organisation for the development of the revolt. There were seven points near the frontier where arms would be stored, and a special battalion of some 1,300 Sudanese troops had been formed to protect these bases of munition supply. Mobilisable personnel were 420 Ethiopian refugees in Djibouti and Berbera, and 600 Eritrean and 600 Ethiopian refugees in Kenya. His military mission, consisting of himself, a doctor, an engineer and two staff officers, with six radio sets, would shortly enter the Gojjam to contact Mangasha and Nagash.

Between eight and nine million rounds of Mannlicher rifle ammunition had been seized from an Italian ship in the Red Sea, and about $2\frac{1}{2}$ million rounds of other types. At Gedaref in the Eastern Sudan (the principal supply base for the revolt) there were about 5,000 old-style single-shot rifles, most of which had already been distributed. At Kosti on the White Nile there were 5,000 rifles of a more modern type, and 2,000 more were on their way from Egypt, and 5,000 more were coming round the Cape. A final 600 in Nairobi gave them 17,600 rifles in all.

We had captured and might claim 2,000 Italian rifles in Libya. Andrew, sharply from across the table, said that they were bloody rusty, sir.

No artillery was available, said Dan, but there were four mortars, each with 100 shells, which the Emperor could have. It was hoped that 400 Hotchkiss light machine-guns—the type once used by British cavalry regiments—would be arriving in a fortnight from Mombasa. Twenty anti-tank rifles were being despatched from Cairo, as there were some forty-five Italian tanks and armoured cars in the area of revolt.

Dan explained that he would like to keep 3,000 rifles for an Imperial bodyguard in Gojjam, so that the Emperor should not slip into the pocket of any single chief. That would leave about 10,000 for distribution to the central provinces of Ethiopia.

We asked Dan to detail the Italian strength in East Africa.

He said that in his view the total Italian garrison was 160,000 men, in the Kaid's 200,000. His figure was made up of 65,000 whites, 80,000 colonial native regulars, and 15,000 *Bande* (a term which covered anything from the well-appointed groups on the frontiers to the untrained following of pro-Italian chiefs).

(In point of fact the Italians had mobilised 300,000 men.)

Dan thought that 80,000 men were needed in Italian East Africa for internal security, and that a force of 25,000–30,000 men might be detached as an army of manoeuvre against the Sudan. What he feared most was that Italian garrisons might withdraw from the interior before we could get at them, and concentrate on the Addis-Djibouti railway line and the Addis-Asmara road, from which it would be difficult to dislodge them.

As for aircraft, the enemy were in a position of plain superiority. They had about 200 machines. Their supplies of petrol, however, were calculated to last for five months. (What a false war-god is petrol; it lasted them a year.) Their position as regards maintenance was even worse. Our bombing of Asmara and Gura, Direedawa and Assab, was aimed at Italy's principal workshops and had been particu-

larly successful at Gura. But the Sudan had no planes for a land offensive, no planes that could reach Addis Ababa or bomb the interior of Gojjam or Gondar. This was doubly true of the season of the rains, between now and October, when aerodromes east of Khartoum were unusable. None of our aircraft had the range to support the revolt.

And finally, finance: 250,000 Maria Theresa dollars, the ounce-weight floreate silver coins of the Red Sea trade, were in Khartoum, 500,000 more were coming, and he had asked for a regular supply of 500,000 a month. That is, he hoped to run the irregular side of the revolt on about £50,000 sterling monthly.

These resources would be expended on the three phases of his scheme. First they would clear the foreground, reducing the main frontier posts west of Gojjam at Metemma and Gubba and thereby opening the routes into Gojjam and Armacheho as well; at the same time they would cut minor Italian communications. Secondly, they would seek large desertions from the enemy ranks with the entry of further arms supplies, and they would attack small posts, bridges, petrol dumps. . . . Finally they would be in a position to attack the larger Italian native garrisons and to beleaguer the white troops in the principal centres.

You will dislodge them from there only by a regular military campaign, said Andrew quickly from across the table. Guerrilla tactics, however successful in the early stages, will not affect the main Italian military position. Dan replied that this was not the view of General Wavell; in any case the plan did not contemplate at any time the use of regular military forces. Then I am satisfied that the Emperor realises that clearly, said Andrew.

The Emperor put some questions about Red Cross funds and the organisation of printed propaganda (for Amharic type is rare) and the conference adjourned until after dinner.

During this time I was with the Emperor. He was deeply distressed, and struck the side of his head several times with his delicate hand. I must admit that I too was surprised by the lack of preparation of material for a revolt. Now that I look back on it I see that it was part of the insane lack of

preparation for war that disgraced and all but disrupted the entire British Commonwealth. But at the time I believed that it was a local neglect of those opportunities of offensive action in Ethiopia (if only to save the Sudan from irresistible invasion) which had been publicised in England during the last two years.

At this moment the Sudan was standing to arms with 2,500 white troops as the last reserve in her three towns, Khartoum the capital, Atbara the railway junction, Port Sudan the harbour; 4,500 Sudanese troops manned 1,200 miles of frontier. There was not a gun among them. There were no fighters and only one squadron of modern bombers in the sky above them. This was the strategic nightmare that the Kaid in Khartoum, with his own form of cool asperity, was facing, and that the Italians in their pusillanimity never made more real. They were to go to bed clasping every ace firmly in their hands.

But we did not know this now. I was promised full air support in England, said the Emperor; and now I am to have not a single aircraft and not a single A.A. gun. *It would have been better had I never left England.*

We met again in the evening. The Emperor had sat by himself for an hour or so and made some notes on a small card. He was completely composed, a different man.

I am grateful, he said, for the aid which the British Government is willing to extend to Ethiopia, and I quite understand the burden which is borne by Britain at this moment. (*He didn't, of course; nobody did, not even the British themselves, and that is what saved them.*) The interests of Britain and Ethiopia are convergent, and those of Ethiopia are actually bound to those of Britain.

I must, however, point out that the material quality of your aid is far from what I expected. An idea of the means necessary to reconquer Ethiopia can be gained from a study of the means which Italy was forced to use to conquer her. Even allowing for Italian inferiority, a powerful force is necessary.

"It was above all due to their aviation that the Italians were able to penetrate my country. It is therefore with the

greatest surprise that I hear that aerial support, which I had been led to believe would be considerable, will scarcely be available at all. There is also a total lack of A.A. In the war of 1935-6 we had a minimum of A.A. but even that had its effect.

The same for munitions. Allowing that there are enough for the British rifles that are going to be distributed, there are not enough for the Italian rifles in the hands of the insurgents.

I must point out that in my proclamation, which has been studied by the British Government, I announced that Ethiopia would have the full aid of her Allies, Great Britain and France. My people as soon as they know that I am in Ethiopia will leave their homes to get arms against the common enemy. If they see me with empty hands they may well lose the faith that has sustained them during the last five years, and become unconsciously the instruments of the enemy. If you read my proclamation, you will see that I have promised that we will attack the enemy not naked as before, but with the same weapons that he used against us. Will this not cause grave disillusionment? Is it not a fact that without British fighters the troops with me will be a free target for the Italian air force? Four mortars and 100 shells! British rifles without magazines! Surely you see that my people may believe the Italian propaganda that Britain and France are feeble.

I believe that it is both in the interest of my country and of British prestige that a more serious effort should be made. But I tell you that even now I am prepared to enter my country again.

My proposals are these:

(1) I want to bring to the Sudan all the Ethiopians who are at Jerusalem and Djibouti and in Kenya, with the arms (40 tons of rifles and ammunition) that have been sent to Djibouti. I want them for my headquarters;

(2) Our most important aim at this moment is that we should provide no gratuitous confirmation for the talking-points of Italian propaganda, all of which are based on the alleged weakness and incapacity of the Allies;

(3) I am not yet in a position to talk about figures, but I reserve to myself the right eventually to present a note of my requirements which I trust will be sympathetically considered;

(4) In view of possible operations pending against Metemma, I want to be present with an Ethiopian force at that action. Between then and now I wish to travel to Khartoum to meet the arrivals from Jerusalem, see my bank and discuss the development of the campaign after Metemma.

Next morning Dan flew cheerfully away to Khartoum. The operation against Metemma never came off because they took our opposite fort of Gallabat before we took Metemma. So the bottom of the foreground phase fell out of the plan, but that did not bother Dan. Considering that in his first cold annoyance at the news of the arrival of an unheralded Haile Sellassie, a high official had told him "You must advise the Emperor to return to England or to enter his country as a fugitive," Dan had not done too badly. Grinning with pride through his powerful spectacles at the miserable line of rags in his hand, he had almost convinced the rest of the bridge-party that they were wonderful even when they were laid face upward on the table.

We followed in a few days' time in the private coach of the Assistant General Manager of the Sudan Railways, which shook us down to Khartoum. Here the Emperor was placed incognito in a Holy Man's house, called Sherif Yusef Bet and coloured pink.

Chapter V

DOWN MEXICO WAY

THEY gave me a car, in which I (prepared at all times against assassination) could drive the Emperor around in the morning and the afternoon, and collect an Indian tailor to make him uniforms and an Armenian shoemaker to make him boots. I lunched daily with him and the Prince and the secretaries in his remote little palace on the boundary sands of Khartoum, and got to know him far better than before as a strange commingling of sweetness and bitterness, of farsight and obstinacy, a sponge as it were for all the emotions of exile, a person enamelled always by his lovely manners and solidified by a patience which prepared him to wait till Doomsday for what he wanted, without showing that he was waiting for anything at all. But he knew that I was not a courtier, and that I must do something else. He was the happier when I was appointed in charge of offensive propaganda, which so far as it affected his subjects across the border, Middle East laid down that he should initiate.

Our tools were few and blunt. There was indeed an Amharic press in Cairo, using the same beautiful but antiquated letters that the first Protestant missionaries had set in their presses in the '40's of last century; but it was short of type, and it was not until the beginning of October that we could start work on it in Khartoum. Until then we had to do our best with a process known as the Douglograph, by which after a pamphlet had been copied out four times by the studious and donkey-speed hand of an Ethiopian scribe it was reproduced in manuscript at about 500 specimens an hour by the Sudan Survey Department, who were also wiping their brows over an issue of maps of Italian East Africa for all our colonial forces on the frontiers of that territory. Such was the preparedness of the armed forces of the Empire for the war with the man who had signed the Gentleman's Agreement. When I visited on broiling

Sudanese days harassed Mr. Hardy, Director of Survey, I remembered with some rancour the Foreign Office man who only three months before had told me that war with Italy was out of the question.

On these pamphlets we impressed the seal of the Emperor, with his rich titles:

POWER OF THE TRINITY THE FIRST
ELECT OF GOD
KING OF THE KINGS OF ETHIOPIA
THE LION OF JUDAH HAS CONQUERED!

And under the titles that quotation from the Psalms of David which Lorenzo in his journey through Gojjam had arranged as the sign to loyal chiefs that the Emperor had indeed returned:

ETHIOPIA RAISES HER HANDS TOWARDS GOD! ኢየሱስ

The first of these documents, called an *Awaj* or decree, was written by the Emperor and Lorenzo together, and was by far the most impressive. A reproduction with translation are in Appendix B. We pushed it into the borderlands of Armacheho Wolkait and Tseggede in the hands of anybody going back with arms during the months of July and August, when Sandford also took it into Gojjam. It became a sort of bible to right-minded Ethiopians. Rather too large to be masticated in one Amharic mouthful, it would be put by the old chief into his pocket or wallet to be read in sacred solitude or leisure and quoted in salient and stunning bits. Then suddenly the R.A.F. told us at the end of July that they were going to blitz Kassala, now occupied by the enemy, for three days hard. We put 15,000 Decrees in their planes. While the Italian Commissario was going mad under twenty-one tons of high explosive, the askaris of five colonial battalions learned by rumour from their literates that the Emperor was back and that he was calling on them to leave the Italians. The emotional effect was important. Eritreans were seen to kiss the seal, press it to their foreheads and weep. There were desertions backward, and some to our lines. The Italians instituted the death penalty for anyone found read-

ing our propaganda, paraded and searched whole battalions, pretended to execute the guilty, ordered their Carabinieri to go out like Hyde Park cleaners after every raid and collect the litter. From thenceforward we knew that the Emperor's propaganda had taken, and we were able to establish the link between persuasion and desertion.

As I was running propaganda, I was also obliged to run desertion. In other words, I had to examine all deserters and extract from them the maximum of military intelligence. We not only established rapidly the Italian order of battle in the Kassala salient, but opened a door on a fascinating vista of the Italian colonial army and colonial system, their moral and material organisation. We built up this picture from groups of deserters who increased monthly until January, when our advance into Eritrea began and the trickle at the first sign of British power became a stream.

From them, it was clear that in spite of Aosta's assurances when he passed through the Sudan a few weeks before war that there would be no war at all, the enemy had been preparing hastily for war for at least two months. Forced mobilisation had begun in Central Ethiopia in April 1940, when many of these troops had been rounded up in the market-places or at bogus carnivals, pushed into lorries, driven off to Asmara and there given a rudimentary training before distribution to their battalions. The Italians evidently thought that control over their families and properties would be enough to tie them down. Each of these new troops had about five shots at iron targets, which he usually missed, learned to move forward at AVANTI! and to fire at FUOCO! and discovered that the best way to lay an aim was to let the backsights rust solid at 200 metres and trust for the best with one's eyes shut. The Italians knew that once they were engaged with their hereditary enemies the Sudanese in the basic Christian-Moslem struggle of their last thousand years they would fight like rats in a trap.

By this means the enemy had padded out some 200 battalions of colonial infantry, whose core was long-service Eritrean and trusted Amhara non-commissioned officers,

bound by an elaborate system of pay, allowances, gorgeous stripes, prizes and pensions to Italy. We were opposed by the biggest colonial army in Africa, on whose childish vanity the enemy played by issuing them with tall tarbooshes and eagle feathers, baggy green riding breeches, different-coloured cummerbunds like old school ties for every battalion. Every battalion had eight heavy machine-guns and twenty-four light, and every brigade of four battalions had a group of eight mountain guns. On their wings swarmed the native *Bande*, and behind them were some forty Blackshirt battalions, mainly engaged in internal security, and the Empire's strategic reserve, the Savoy Grenadier Division. Only the bravest of the colonial troops would come to us, for the huge size of this army and its successes at Kassala, Gallabat, Kurmuk, Moyale and later in British Somaliland convinced the bulk that it was invincible.

It is true that Italian military intelligence was ludicrous; probably there has never been a system more gullible and more given to wishful thought than theirs; it was worse than the Russian in Finland. Typical of their method was the report sent back by the commander of a frontier garrison near Kassala before the outbreak of war:

"Informers state that there is great confusion in Kassala. About twenty tanks painted brown charge around the town continually to intimidate the people. No Englishman was seen. It has been ascertained and confirmed that the Sudanese population and especially that of Kassala are awaiting Italian troops. Women and children continually babble the words 'Mussolini, Mussolini.'

"(Sgd.) CAPTAIN CERMINARA."

Nevertheless, they knew our utter weakness in the Sudan; and they knew the delicacy of our position in Egypt, and how much more delicate it would be if they broke us in the Sudan. Their traders domiciled in the Sudan were visiting Asmara weekly before the outbreak of war. By some extraordinary interpretation of the phrase *Bon Voisinage* we were allowing not only their commercial aircraft but reinforcement

squadrons of their Savoia bombers to fly through our aerodromes at Wadi Halfa and Khartoum right until the end. They knew how feeble we were on land and in the air. Why then did they not attack us, as they were always boasting to their native troops that they would? They said that Khartoum and Atbara were in their pocket; and they were.

Their senior generals, when in the end they were taken prisoner, admitted that they had planned an operation against the railway junction at Atbara, which they did not carry out for lack of fuel and transport. It is a fact that although they had stocked up East Africa pretty well with fuel and food for a long war, some genius in the Fascist system had forgotten tyres. But they could have taken Atbara. Faced with this point, they explained that they could not have maintained themselves against counter-attack from Egypt unless our armies in Egypt were pinned by Graziani, who was just thinking of a final attack on Egypt when Sidi Barrani blasted his career for ever.

So the attack that they talked about never happened. One of the other things that stopped it and saved us was the patriot movement in Ethiopia, of which the deserters also had something to tell us. It turned half the greatest colonial army in Africa into shadow chasers. But to understand it one must go back in time to 1936, to the days after the Emperor left the country to which he was now returning; and in psychology, to the Ethiopian character.

The Amhara or dominant section of the Ethiopian race (even under the Italians) are a temperamental group of mountaineers, given to feelings of intense excitement, happiness, depression, courage and cowardice. They inherit a respect for leadership, though each free man is never backward in saying his piece; they swarm round a personality like ants. Careless, making little effort, lacking persistence in its continuous sense, they none the less revert to old hatreds and old decisions after long periods of apparent forgetfulness. The most intelligent branch of the Ethiopian race, they always know better than anybody else. Thus they have firearms aplenty but little skill in their management. Vain,

restless, with beautiful manners and for all their avarice generous at heart, the Amhara are once more self-contradictory; though bound in a feudal system they are great individualists, and each man has his own ideas about everything and when roused screams them at his neighbour. The diversity and striking interest of their characters were noted by the war artist Bordon who worked among them, and who compared them with the good-natured, easy uniformity of the Sudanese. Often possessed of a refined beauty in youth, they soon grow lines and creases in their faces; some turn Christlike, others go Cunningham-Graham, others spoilt and vexatious, others sparkle. Seen in the mass, they almost shock one by their differences. Withal they are argumentative. It is a fallacy that they settle things by fighting. They far prefer *parlementaire*, letter-writing, collusion, compromise, combination. When they are not interfered with by Europeans like the Italians they are neither thieves, nor lawless, nor basically uncivilised. Where they have been brutal, as in parts of South-Western Ethiopia, their brutality is directly traceable to their inefficiency. They just muddle along in a subtle way, negotiating and parleying on this and that; for a long time the muddle does not worry them because they enjoy the subtlety; then suddenly they realise that valuable time has been lost and no decision reached, and they must out with the sword to slice the knot of their own making. On the large canvas, one could see this theme in their bloody-minded last-minute collection of taxes and dues from the peasantry of the south-west. In miniature, in the whips with which they cleared the clogged exits of their churches after they had forgotten to appoint vergers and churchwardens, or whatever Coptic ecclesiastical traffic police are called, to do the same thing more sanctimoniously.

To keep order in this ancient system demands a central government which is accepted by the people and which also puts a strong hand on the barons in the provinces. The only central government universally accepted by the dominant race, which is the only race in Ethiopia with an idea of national government, is the Solomonian dynasty, by legend descended from Sheba's irregular sheets. The last repre-

sentative of that line was Haile Sellassie, anointed and crowned by the primate of the Ethiopian Church to whose forms the Amhara are fanatically attached.

This crown is the final solvent of feudal, that is territorial quarrels. When the crown goes there is chaos. Little wonder that when Lorenzo went round Gojjam in 1939 he found one patriot chief wrangling with another, and everywhere the voice "We need a *danya*, a judge."

In 1936 the Emperor left Ethiopia. The Solomonian dynasty had been driven out of its boundaries for the first time in history. One had been murdered, another driven into hiding by the Mohammedans, some had been quietly deposed or had taken their own lives. But the seed of Solomon had never been exterminated from Ethiopia. In the consequent total breakdown of order the whole population turned to loot and burn. Within a year the remaining leaders had been destroyed by the Italians; of the two Rases surviving in the field, Desta the Emperor's son-in-law was captured in fair battle, executed, and his head exposed on a stake; Imru was taken and sent to Ponsa in the Mediterranean, where he refuses still to speak to an Italian.

The modern Italian temperament was given free rein in the new Empire. The falsely noble, savagely handsome features of the Viceroy Graziani half revealed the new qualities of government in Ethiopia. Proud, cruel, unforgiving, mean, deceptive, cynical, the Mediterranean Fascist got enormous fun for one year out of kicking a system that was down. Patrick Roberts, who used to be our Chargé d'Affaires in Addis Ababa, once described to me the speech made by Graziani when he had ordered the execution of the sons of Ras Kassa, the Emperor's cousin, after the offer of full pardon if they would surrender—and the ninnies had! The splendid Roman harangued an audience of Ethiopian notables on the wickedness of Kassa's sons and their just reward; at every clever perversion of the truth or challenging sophistry the high Italian officials on either side raised their hands to their mouths, sniggered and winked. It was above all this cynicism, with its consequence that there was

no justice, no sure principle in government, that bred in the Ethiopians their hatred of Italy.

It crystallised in one incident which, as I have pieced it together from eye-witnesses, I give in some detail as it was the fount of all.

On 17 February 1937 Graziani was making another speech to Ethiopian notables from the steps of the portico of the Emperor Haile Sellassie's Little Palace, used by him as an office. A young Eritrean called Abraha who was employed by the Italian administration as an interpreter was, in brief, fed up with Graziani and threw two bombs at him. The first hit the roof of the portico and did little harm, the second got Graziani in the behind as he turned to run into the Palace, and also caused the chief of the Italian Air Force to lose one each of his eyes and legs. In the confusion usual at such a juncture of events, and worse confounded where the actors are Italians and Ethiopians, the Carabinieri sprayed the whole human garden present with their tommy-guns, killing some of their own number in the process, Abraha escaped over the wall and was not seen again, and the head of the Addis Ababa Fascio jumped up and said that the Italians must wipe out every Ethiopian male as a vengeance.

The Ethiopian males within hearing began to climb trees and walls, whence Blackshirts picked them off with their carbines. From there the cruel panic spread into the city. All those who had surrendered with Ras Imru were taken out and shot by the police, with many others who had recently submitted of their own free will. Other Ethiopians who spoke foreign languages or had served the Emperor were, fortunately for themselves, arrested and imprisoned. They thus, although they were one and all sent to three years' suffering on Mediterranean islands without trial, escaped the visit of the Blackshirts who were now going round Addis Ababa on their errand of murder. Ethiopian huts must be searched for arms; some Ethiopians were unwise enough to run away, so they were shot down. A bloodlust started is not easily quenched, and besides, the qualifications of modern Italy to run an Empire had to be proved. They therefore

stood round native huts, bombed them ablaze, and potted at the Ethiopians when they ran out. Others in lorries chased Ethiopians down and ran over them; or tied them by the feet to the tail of the truck and pulled them thus along the public streets. Women were beaten to death with sticks. A friend of mine saw a little Ethiopian boy running down a path. Three Italians ordered him to stop. He ran on and they fired at him. He fell down, staggered up, and ran a few paces. They fired at him again. This time he did not get up. One of them walked up to him and clubbed out his brain with the butt of his rifle. The massacre went on for three days, by which time our records have it that 6,000, the French that 9,000, were killed. The Ethiopians have told me that the figure was much higher, but it is known that Africans exaggerate. For weeks after Blackshirts were touting action pictures—and stills—round the towns. Naturally we, who were seeking a gentlemanly settlement of all outstanding questions with Italy at this time, did not hear much of this in the British Press; the murderous behaviour of the Reds in Madrid made much more important reading, underlining as it did the absolute necessity of non-intervention on behalf of cad.

But Ethiopia heard about it. The Ark of St. George was sent out secretly to Ababa Aragai, the rebel in the hills outside Addis Ababa. It had by its presence blessed the victory of Menelik at Adowa on St. George's Day forty-one years back, and it symbolised the resistance of the nation. Orders were sent out from Addis Ababa to shoot all the surviving Amhara chiefs in southern and western Abyssinia, and to cleanse with the machine-gun the most important of the national monasteries which in spite of their backwardness and sloth were suspected of harbouring arms and a spirit of independence.

None of these dire measures, nor military expeditions, could quench the rebellion that flared up in Gojjam, in north-eastern Shoa, in Begemder and Lasta east of Gondar, in Armacheho between Gondar and the Sudan. Murdered garrisons could be replaced, but the lost countryside could never be recovered. Graziani's injured member would get

better in hospital, but the whole western flank of Ethiopia had rotted away.

Since those terrible days more than three years had passed in which the Italians had tried to rebuild confidence in their Empire by a vast outlay of money on public works and by the conciliatory and honourable processes of the Duke of Aosta. Cut off from all sources of clothing, salt, imported goods such as sugar and tea, and eaten from within by the publicised generosity of the new regime, the rebellion languished. But the principal leaders never gave in, and they kept till the end a fair following. Though they were twice disappointed in 1938 and 1939, they held to the hope that Italy would be involved in war with a power on their frontiers who sheltered their King. That was why Lorenzo's visit was so important. The end is not far off, he promised them.

They had long since ceased to attack Italian forts, and they were flagging now in attacks on Italian communications. The enemy garrisons, by the threat of reprisals on villages and property, were gradually extending their area of control and forming *Bande* of irregular submitted Ethiopian communities to protect it. But the Ethiopian patriot chiefs were still playing a sinister tune on Italian nerves and kept large Italian forces busy on the work of internal security. This was attested not only by the Italian order of battle, which maintained at the beginning of this campaign the bulk of its battalions in the Abyssinian interior, but by a report made in May 1940 by Consul-General Bonacorsi, the head of the Blackshirts in East Africa and an opponent of the policy of Aosta.

"Throughout the Empire," he wrote, "there is a state of latent rebellion which will have its final and tragic denouement when war breaks out with our enemies. If at any point whatever of our Empire a detachment of English or Frenchmen were to enter with banner unfurled they would need little or no troops for they would find the vast mass of the Abyssinian population would unite themselves to that flag to combat and eject our forces. In the case of such an emer-

gency we should find ourselves unable to withstand the enemy given the state of unpreparedness and the lack of equipment of our forces."

The patriots had also rendered us material service in wearing down the fighting efficiency of the enemy. It was they who obliged the Italian commander of a colonial battalion to write the following report:

"Armament is deficient. The machine-guns are worn out after five years of continuous war and should be replaced. The Mannlicher and Steyer rifles are steadily deteriorating, and a good supply of spares is absolutely necessary. The issue of lubricating oil may be enough in peace time, but now it is far below the indispensable minimum of efficiency. Just because they are worn the arms need a larger quantity of oil. Until now we have made shift with motor lubricating oil mixed with paraffin, but if operational activities are to be intensified a larger issue is absolutely essential.

"Equipment is in a lamentable state. The few issues made have sufficed to replace part of the deficiencies only. Half the company is without water bottles, partly on account of the small number originally issued. . . . For some time sandals have been short and a suitable issue has not been made. . . . The same can be said of pouches which are so necessary for holding ammunition, and of bombs. Few askaris still possess a serviceable haversack for very many have lost theirs in the various actions. Many are in rags and need new cummerbunds, which have moreover a high moral value."

Later I examined a muleteer deserter of the 77th Colonial Battalion, from Gondar. He still carried proudly the general service medal of the Battalion, inscribed thus:

1937.—ANNO XV.	LASTA—SOCOTA—UOGGERA.
1938.—ANNO XVI.	BULGA—BELESA—CAMCAM BEGE- MEDER—MADEIRA MARIAM.
1939.—ANNO XVII.	FERASBIET—FAGUTTA—GUTA.
1940.—ANNO XVIII.	ACEFER.

Every one of these battlefields lay within the area of Amharic revolt across our border. Every one had exhausted the Italian reserves and saved British lives.

This then was the situation on the other side. A huge colonial army facing both ways because of a rebellion whose weariness they did not yet understand. Our propaganda had also to face both ways, on the rebellion and on the colonial troops. The enemy had two main themes for these two forces: the democracies were weak, witness the fall of France and the capture of our frontier outposts; Haile Sellassie was dead and would never return. Yet they had persuaded many of us to believe that the return of Haile Sellassie was not desired by the Ethiopian people !

Chapter VI

KHARTOUM

IN a book which I once wrote about the Italo-Ethiopian war I said that Addis Ababa was the cleanest native town in Africa. In those young days I leapt to premature conclusions, for I had not been to Khartoum. Against all the assaults of nature and in spite of all the economies of man, Khartoum is that.

The Blue Nile flows in magnificent processional flood past the terrace of the Grand Hotel, where I stayed that month of August. It brings the rich silt of another harvest to the cotton companies of the Sudan Gezira and the Egyptian fellaheen; it gives anchorage to the pelicans that wheel in the sunset above it, as smooth in their full-breasted awkwardness as their fellow-gawks the flying-boats of Imperial Airways; it quenches the desire of the black goats on the mud flats of Tuti island opposite; it floats down a rare hippopotamus and echoes the musketry of the emboated Khartoum police against him; it carries without a blush of shame at its own unfashionableness steamers that have never heard of stream-line, and whose square top-heavy iron tiers of decks are bred in the same womb as the interior of a Victorian music-hall; it holds an enormous pink mirror to the nightfall, to the ochreous curls of cloud in the west and the little palms pinned stiffly to its distant margin; it is graced by the launches of the Governor-General and the Kaïd freighted with cocktails on a fresh-winded evening; it pushes aside by main force at the Mogren junction the sallow waters of the White Nile; the Sudan Government Almanac itself admits that it goes past at many million pints to the minute. But to have laid on water sewerage on the biggest Nile town south of Cairo would have cost £E250,000, so in forty years nobody has done it.

Nor does the weather encourage cleanliness. At the end of a hot and heavy day, when the whisky bottles are passing round the War Office and the fans are chucking oil at Most Secret documents, there is a sudden cooling and movement

of the air; one looks out of the window to see a yellow cloud as round as the head of a holm-oak above the trees, and getting bigger. This is the only occasion when Khartoum servants throw dignity down the drain and qualify for the flat or hurdle events in the Olympic games. There follows a banging of windows and a smashing of shutters that would make an Italian battalion commander put down defensive fire all night. This is a Haboob, a coagulated sand-wind of the desert that sweeps over Khartoum like those smoky Eastern djinns that emerge from bottles, and grow, and dominate, and obliterate. The Haboob rushes through Khartoum with filthy intent. He knocks over glasses full of valuable drink and tears tablecloths into the gutter. He takes trees and puts them on roofs, and roofs and puts them on trees. He fills beds on the verandahs with earth, and infiltrates even the defences so brilliantly manned by the Khartoum servants. He renders open-air cinemas invisible and bawls out the Cathedral organ. He takes aeroplanes head over heels from one end of the aerodrome to the other, and does not improve them. But above all he is the mother and father of filth. He has never cleaned his hands since time began, and he touches everything in his rabidinous run.

Yet Khartoum is the cleanest native town in Africa. The Haboob has gone, and the early morning camelcarts have fulfilled the requirements of sanitation with many a hollow clang. Dawn breaks. The streets are swept clear, the Sudanese population is out in its bright white nightshirts or *gallabias*, its smiling face and smooth skin. The long lines of trees glisten as if they were spat upon, polished and paraded for an inspection by Kitchener. Impeccable British officers of the Sudan Defence Force and lissom giraffemen of the Civil Service are saluted with a clash by blacks ashine. There are no flies and no mosquitoes because some Department killed them all long ago. Sparkling American taxis angle for clean-cut new piastres down rectangular streets. The traffic police are clothed in white samite daily renewed. Acute and clean-shaven, the Kaid walks briskly into his office between blinding brass cannon. There can be nothing like it in the whole world.

The Kaid was the epitome of this system. Major-General (now Lieut.-General Sir William) Platt loved his Sudanese troops, who fought for him better than any other native soldiers in Africa. A regular of the regulars who had brilliantly commanded one of the first mechanised brigades in England, the Kaid had a mind like his face, which was sharply cut and limber and pointed to the nose and browned by many tropical summers round a straight determined mouth like that of the mummified Pharaoh Seti. The human feature in this composition was his eyes, which were deep-set and could smile like a boy's; but in a flash they were back to work again, the softness in them turned to a snake's glare. His switches from humour to fierceness were alarming for a new junior officer, who could never make out when the car would go into reverse. Yet this was not ill-humour in the Kaid; it was simply his way, which one learned to respect, of bringing his Headquarters up with a snap to the programme in hand, which in those days was the theoretically impossible defence of the Sudan. The Kaid in his office had three gods: constant training in the field, absorption and analysis of paper at the desk, and regular soldiers. He found it very difficult to find a place in his scheme of things for irregulars, guerrillas, partisans, *Bande* and the like. This was not because he did not move with the times, for he was a most modern soldier, and if his mind had some of the narrowness it had all the penetrative power of the needle. But he was convinced, and in the end I found rightly convinced, that the Italians in East Africa would be defeated only by a regular army highly trained and disciplined, moving with the suppleness and the obedience of steel over the mountains of Keren and Amba Alagi. Taking rapid decisions as he always did, he therefore tended to give irregular warfare rather less than its true value; and with his diminutive resources he was chary of spending much on a shot in the dark. Above all, he was entirely unpolitical. The spare, jockey-like figure jumping out of his car as if it were a Bren carrier or, deep in military thought, swinging his legs on his windowsill was now confronted with a political problem of the first magnitude.

The Sudan did not like Abyssinia. Disarmed and orderly, open-hearted and unsubtle, their experience was one of a restless frontier peopled in their rather exaggerated imagination—for one exciting incident lasts long in a well-plotted District Commissioner's life—with elephant-poachers, gold-smugglers and slavers. The Sudan Government Education Department still use a textbook with an illustration of the ferocious Abyssinian horseman pouncing on the unarmed innocent Sudanese boy. . . .

On a country and a capital like this, whose motto was the Biblical one "Go and he goeth," the Abyssinian refugees of the Middle East now descended by every train to fight for their country; while others in their dusty shammas and with Italian captured rifles in their hands clustered on the frontier and clamoured to be taken to Khartoum to see their Emperor.

No arrangements had been made for the refugee influx, whom the Emperor wished to be trained as his bodyguard—the same bodyguard that was proposed across the table at Wadi Halfa. All that we could do at first was to arrest them at the railway station and put them in the cells, where at least they would get board and lodging. This was the beginning of the new Abyssinian Army.

Then Robert Cheesman took a hand. Robert Cheesman is a white-haired British agriculturalist who is interested in birds as well as plants. For nine years until 1934 he was British consul at Dangila in Gojjam¹ and yearly he trekked round Tana and the country of the Blue Nile and the wastelands between Gojjam and the Sudan, in his leisurely but totalitarian farmer's way annotating not only the wild life but every road and track in the country. Our maps are thus entirely due to him—the maps, that is, which were going to be used by us in our exploitation of the Patriot movement. But it takes many a month before you learn this from Robert Cheesman, as he sits in self-sufficient solitude before his evening whisky on the terrace of the Grand Hotel, Khartoum, observing the finches' habits in flight and slowly

¹ Appendix D.

filling his pipe with a mixture inferior to that which he grows in Kent.

Robert Cheesman has always had trouble with his age, which, however, an unhurried persistence overcomes. In the last war he was at first rejected on the score of age, but came back in a week seven years younger and as pink-faced as ever. The first mention of him on the files of the Sudan Government says that he should not go to Dangila because he is too old for the job. This Cincinnatus was called from his hop-gardens at the age of sixty-one in March 1940 to take over at the last moment the Khartoum section of intelligence connected with the Abyssinian patriot movement. He was, of course, an old friend of Esmé's family. When I first met him he showed me the brochure of a remarkable manure which he had invented from the droppings of chickens. The chickens do it through netting, something is added, and the whole produces roses without compare, except those in the cheeks of Uncle Robert.

Robert Cheesman, placidly amassing in longhand his files on rebel chiefs, decided that something must be done for the Abyssinian refugees. He had them moved from the Police Station to the evacuated Animal Transport Lines of the Sudan Defence Force, where they were fed, and given a blanket and a groundsheet and three piastres a day, which is eightpence. He was then permitted to list, but not to enlist them; for there were no arms and no N.C.O.s for their training.

This did not deter Robert Cheesman, whose pace is as steady as that of pitch on an incline. He issued corporal's stripes to one of the Abyssinians without permission from anybody, and raised the pay of this delighted person, the first albeit improper N.C.O. of a restored Abyssinia. The refugees were not allowed to drill as they were not an armed formation, but Robert Cheesman told them to do P.T. in the morning and to march round the Lines in step. This cheered them up considerably, and when he was asked to explain Robert Cheesman replied that it was just boy-scout stuff.

He listed them at the Khartoum War Office, where they

sprawled in their irregular enthusiasm on the well-kept grass. They were therefore moved some distance away to the shade of trees near the Civil Secretary's Office, and brought up semi-secretly one by one for interrogation. Uncle Robert had to ask them all whether they wanted to fight for their country, a question which they regarded as the best joke in years.

Then they walked back to the camp one by one in their careless, vain, self-confident, independent, springy stride.

He found an ideal chief for the Ethiopian camp, whither the first deserters were now going and which now numbered some 300 diverse souls.

Jack Maurice fought in the Boer War, cowpunched across the Atlantic, and was for ten years our Frontier Officer at Gambeila, the British trading enclave in the middle of Abyssinian territory on the River Sobat, stuffed with fever, gold, coffee and Brummagem. One would therefore imagine Jack to be a dashing adventurous type, irritating to a degree the settled administrators of the Sudan plains. But Jack has not an enemy in the world. A huge, shambling, mild man, he had emerged unscathed from the battle between mosquitoes and alcohol for the possession of his blood. It seems that they just killed each other off like the Russians and the Germans, leaving Jack the *beatus possidens*. His slow beatitude can continue the party until dawn. After he has ginned one circle of companions off their chairs and out into the dizzy night, Jack will rise and join another circle and give them the same send-off. At Gambeila he was a great friend of Ras Mulugeta, the convivial old hawk who was Abyssinian Minister of War and was killed in '36. Later he entertained the Italians, and had them picked up from the dry river-bed on the boundary next morning and carried home to convalesce. Such a gentle character could not exist without pets. These were Jinny, a variegated dog that claimed some discreditable relationship with the stud of the Emperor in Addis Ababa; and four Muscovy ducks that travelled and laid eggs for Jack wherever he went. With these he escaped at eight hours' notice from Gambeila when Italy declared war, travelling by foot, bicycle and

canoe to Malakal. His old Italian guests repayed the flowing generosity of Jack by pillaging his house and in particular stealing his favourite pair of riding-breeches, for which he never forgave them.

Jack was an ideal camp commandant for Ethiopians because he was enormous and slow and so delightfully irregular. When an Unenlisted Ethiopian claimed a pound to support an Unmarried Wife Living as a Dependant, Jack did not look up Field Service Regulations Part I or turn him over to Q (Movements), but took the quid out of his pocket and got him out of the office. When his charges grew really excited and complained in piercing voices that there was not enough pea in the pea soup Jack, knowing how irregular it was to give them pea soup at all, simply went on reading his mail from home. He knew his Ethiopians. They were mad keen on being soldiers and drilling and shouting each other about. So he let them. Robert and Jack, the illicit distillers of the Abyssinian army, were a pair to whom we owe a lot that they will never claim.

Superintending all, and sucking an acid drop or a bull's-eye at the same time, was the best-looking, best-natured man in the Sudan, Jose Penney.

For the purposes of the campaign Jose had set aside the work of Director of Public Security and put on the uniform, Egyptian crown and three stars, of a Miralai. But that was the limit of his pretension. As G.S.O.1 Intelligence on the Kaid's staff he still drove himself through Khartoum in a fifteen-year-old Ford that should long since have gone to stud, waving a muscular arm at the most lowly of his friends in more impressive automobiles. Jose was one of those rare people who appear to get a real pleasure from the act of driving and really seem to be helping the car along, like a kid with a scooter.

Jose was a classical scholar at one time; uprooted from his pots by the war; then in the Egyptian police where he rose to his own form of bonhomie with the underworld in Alexandria, and learnt his Cairene splutter of Arabic. In the Sudan during the last fifteen years (the life of his Ford)

he had grown white, wavy hair brushed back from his smiling face, but everything else about him was young and alive; the only thing to which he seemed unconscious was his own handsome appearance, upon which he built no superstructure of dignity whatsoever. He used a remarkably well-fashioned nose mainly to twist and snort through. His favourite way of listening was the sitting-akimbo, with his body forward, legs out and open, and hands firmly on either knee.

Jose took every Ethiopian under his wing. Long before somebody far away had decided with pontifical labour to issue this or that special fund, Jose had already financed its objects by borrowing from another. The limit of his anticipation of inevitable decisions was measured only by the number of pounds left idle in his safe.

Though he was chief of the entire military intelligence system of the Sudan, Jose cheerfully undertook the security of the Emperor; the housing of Ethiopian refugees, high and low; the establishment of their pay-rolls and camps; the reception of visitors from Ethiopia itself; and a lot of other harassing details as personal matters, to be despatched by him. His office was constantly full of Daba Birru, a very fat and genial Galla who at the first supervised the Ethiopian community for the Emperor; liked by Jose as a fellow humorist of equally democratic leanings, but continually pruned by Jose of bottles of brandy, and taxis, and other branches of expenditure. "We must make Daba static; he whirls round too much," was one of Jose's mottoes. As the refugees poured in Daba, hospitable man, circulated the more dizzily. But in the end Jose, by his far-sighted transfers of funds ("We'll all be in the dock some day together"), had saved the Dedjasmatches from the streets, had given bread to the hungry Ethiopian intelligentsia, had liberated the deserters from the prisoners' cage where they are still pigeon-holed by British military law, had signed and passed my pamphlets with only the most sensible of queries, and after a hot morning's work in the office and half a dozen cups of tea was ready for two pink gins at the Club and a game of tennis before he buckled to it again for the evening. Jose is for me the best living advertisement for a classical education.

It made him like the contact of people of every sort, it made him laugh at himself, be humane and honest, detect the essential, work in the lamp of common sense and regard rules not as the fetters but the shorthand of life. His memoranda were terse examples of English in the nude. He would have written many more if he had not, in his constant hurry, jotted the ideas down on a blotter which the office boy changed before Jose came back to work next morning.

My hardest job throughout all this was to keep the Emperor occupied. He had come out to the Sudan believing that the British Empire was immensely strong and could give him immediate support. Dan had persuaded him that he should wait until the end of the rains in October before he re-entered Abyssinia; and then Dan had left with his Mission by secret ways for the Gojjam. It was evident to me that the little man would have to wait in the Sudan much longer than that. Where were the arms; where were the trainers of the Abyssinians? Something had to be done to hold his attention and to prevent his health from deterioration in a climate that the Ethiopian mountaineer loathes.

His own patience and the dominating decency of his nature were in alliance with us. A drive along the Nile, an evening in a launch would satisfy him for a while. There was the flow of chiefs from the frontier, beginning with a grand old man, Fitorari Misfin Redda, with a face like a whimsical Abraham Lincoln and a reputation for quite unethiopian discipline among his followers, and ending with the jealous do-nothing leaders from Armacheho who had got most of our inferior rifles and therefore wanted more. Misfin was a good raider who later dealt the Italians some shrewd knocks; just before the war, feeling no doubt that it would all go in the end into the same kitty, he had crossed the Sudan frontier and lifted a quantity of our grain. He stared at the Emperor at the first meeting as if he had seen a transfiguration, then lowered his grey head and long lithe body to the carpet. Outside the two handsome boys that he had brought with him fiddled with their cartridges.

Haile Sellassie has a strong decorative sense, as those who knew him in the old Addis Ababa understood. Then, as the

State Himself, he personally passed all the designs for public monuments, postage stamps, the uniforms of the Imperial Guard, the dress of his Ministers. He insisted on order, neatness and punctuality at his palace; his regal attitude in this matter was once reflected in a remark of his to me—"it went like a Court"—where an Englishman would have said "it went like clockwork." We therefore spent a lot of time in the Pink Palace at Khartoum choosing material for uniforms, tidying up the patriots who arrived at the Khartoum rest-house before they were presented to him, ordering the ribbons of his and his chieftains' numerous decorations. But still the time hung heavily on his hands, and he would turn from the contemplation of ribbons and stuffs to ask the more practical question: Who is preparing my caravan for the march into Abyssinia; where are the tents and saddles?

The curtain of the rains had descended between us and Abyssinia, and messengers moved sluggishly up the glistening mountains, through the torrents and the slush and the fever of the borderlands that they feared as much as death itself. But to the letter that the Kaid had sent the day after the outbreak of war, on 11 June, the reply of Dedjasmach Mangasha Jamburie, greatest of the Gojjam patriot leaders, arrived at last at Roseires in the middle of August. It came down the great escarpment that bounds Gojjam to the west of Dangila and Burye, and was carried to the border past the huge solitary massif of Belaya, inhospitable mountain, where another loyal chief Fitorari Taffere Zalleka had remained unmolested for the last five years. Fitorari Taffere, who was to prove an able propagandist for us, added a letter of his own and sent both down with a convoy of men for arms.

They were pleasant dignified epistles, enormously sealed, full of contempt for the Italians "who live a life of misery in their tiny hiding places." Our messenger to Mangasha and Nagash, the other principal patriot leader in the territory of Burye, had been welcomed with a *feu de joie* from every musket in the loyal lands, the drums of decree had been beaten publicly in all the villages around the Italian forts

of Dangila, Enjabara, Debra Mai, Burye, Dembecha. The Order to the people published by Mangasha and Nagash, openly under the Italian nose, was to collect one thousand mules and men with pack saddles, food and scrip for their journey to the Sudan in the season of rain and disease. Never had so great an expedition been planned in Gojjam at this time of year. The Italians knew all about it, the two Dedjasmatches knew that they knew, and they did not care a pin. They ruled the country off the roads. In his letter¹ Mangasha asked for 100 machine-guns and five "small guns" to attack the enemy in his redoubts. Taffere Zalleka, in his,¹ asked for a quantity of rifles and ammunition, and also verbally for a uniform "tailored with gold braid to fit the figure of my brother, which is much the same as mine; and a hat like that which the British Consul in Dangila used to wear!" Robert Cheesman laughed when that letter came in. A good lad, he said, a chip of the old block: I had his father, Zalleka Leku of Belaya, exiled for elephant-poaching in the Sudan Dinder Game Reserve, an excellent shot. All that the messengers who brought this correspondence had to add was this: we were to expect the caravan at any time now in the region of Gallabat, which Mangasha naturally believed to be still in our hands; it would be led by Shallaka Misfin, a former Captain of a Thousand in the Emperor's Guard; we should beware of bogus caravans possibly despatched by the Italians, and should study closely the imprint of Mangasha's seal on the other letter that the caravan would carry.

Almost at the same time rumours came across the frontier that the expedition had been destroyed by the Italians near Gallabat. The survivors had been driven back to Gojjam. Colonel Castagnola, commanding the Italian garrison at Metemma-Gallabat, boasted of this victory to his men. The rebellion had suffered the most grave set-back at the most unkind of moments, when we were rapidly losing British Somaliland. . . .

But the story was a lie.

The grand caravan had indeed bumped into an Italian patrol in the bamboo thickets of the crossing of the Merduba

¹ Appendix C.

stream. Shallaka Misfin's men, scouting forward, had shot an Italian as he read his newspaper and had then thrown their bombs, wounding others. They had lost two wounded themselves when the enemy counter-attacked. It was clearly stupid for the caravan to press forward on the same track now that they had been detected, since their only escort were the 100 men of Misfin. So they broke back, and some of them lost heart and returned to Gojjam. More than half drove north and then west over foodless and wellnigh waterless country until they came to the fresh cascades of the Atbara near Meshrab el Habash, the Watering Place of the Abyssinians, in Sudan territory. Here half a dozen men swam across in their exhaustion and reported to the young Assistant District Commissioner. Nearly all their animals had been killed by nigma, the horse sickness of the lowlands, and when the starved convoy had slaughtered and eaten the bulls that Laurie provided they vomited. But in a few days they were restored, and came up to Gedaref.

I felt that the time had come to take the Emperor out of Khartoum, to show him to his people, to establish that imperious link with the centre of the revolt in Gojjam that even Sandford with his letters of credence from Haile Sellassie and his circumstantial description could not provide. Above all, the Emperor must appear to his people from the sky in the biggest available British warcraft. We had already taken photographs of him standing with British officers in front of a Blenheim; he had himself written inscriptions. I was prepared for any gentle hoax, and I got my way.

On the lush polo ground at Gedaref, green as a new billiard table and surrounded by the bright russet boles of the tall trees, and by anti-aircraft Bren guns standing like praying mantises in the tall vivid grass, Travers Blackley, the District Commissioner, set up the Mulad tent of the area; a large structure, richly dight in blue and red and green and yellow Koranic inscriptions. He also sewed in secrecy an Ethiopian flag.

We went down in the Sudan's biggest plane, a Vickers Valentia troop-carrier, escorted by two Vickers Vincents.

The types had been obsolete for many a long year; they had long lost their schoolboy, streamline appeal, and had been shamefacedly excluded from the silhouette books; they were apparently sustained by string alone and they creaked as they flew, if flying indeed is an honest description of a motion whereby for minutes on end the part of the earth immediately beneath one seemed to remain in all essentials unchanged. At last we arrived at Gedaref, and landed over the dangerously leaping heads of hundreds of Ethiopians on a patch very little larger than our own planes.

They came up to the tent where the Emperor sat impassive in his happiness with the Itchegi, the Lord Chief Prior of the Ethiopian monasteries, on his right hand and his exiled great lords of the Empire on his left. There they went lunatic, and told him one by one in piercing incredible falsetto how many Italians they had killed, how many wounds they had survived, how much they had desired to see his face in the last five years. They strutted like fighting-cocks from side to side in front of him, jutting their heads to left and right like beaks in their boasting. They threw on the carpet in front of him spurs, epaulettes, stars of the Italian officers that had fallen to them. "We are your servants and your slaves; you are our umbrella!" they shrieked. Their hair was very long and stood in gollywog style around their heads, but their features were regular and almost feminine in their nicety, even in this frenzy. Priests in white turbans had accompanied the caravan, and holding their silver crucifixes in handkerchiefs they droned away to themselves a contemplative psalm of praise, like bees at honey. It was the greatest day in their lives. In Gedaref the bulk of the naughty women are Ethiopians, for their charms exceed those of the Sudanese and they are besides more liberal; these loo-loo-looed in the background. When a Gojjami drew too near to the Emperor's chair or looked like losing his sanity for good he was driven back by Misfin with a hide thong. To British officers who had been permeated by the Italian propaganda that the Gojjam was separatist and "anti-Haile Sellassie"—as even I his friend had once been—this was a revelation. Then the officers of the single company

of the West Yorkshires who garrisoned Gedaref were introduced to the Emperor and photographed round his table. The pamphlets of the Emperor and the Blenheim were circulated in packets as photographs which had been taken on arrival at the aerodrome. We published the others later as a conference between the Emperor and his British Staff.

After a morning of this the Emperor retired to Blackley's house and had a rest. The Gojjamis were issued with 1,000 rifles, munitions, donkeys, bulls, khaki, and after many days went back to the high escarpment, armed and living witnesses that their Emperor had really returned with aid, in men and aircraft.

An official communique announced that the Emperor was "somewhere in Africa." The Press came down to Khartoum and interviewed him and photographed him, but the despatch neither of stories nor of pictures was allowed. He found this very difficult to understand, and I to explain, as we walked together after lunch on the verandah of his house. I did my best, saying that it was for his personal security. The Italians, however, although they kept up their propaganda in the colonial army and to the patriots that he was dead, announced in their Italian broadcasts that he was in Khartoum. They did not know what house in Khartoum, or the Caproni that dived almost on to its roof one night in August, and then straightened out to drop its bombs on the fort and hangars behind, would certainly have expended some of its load on the King of Kings.

We got him a superb state umbrella from India, costing if I remember rightly 150 guineas, made for a Maharajah, on a silver shaft with gold sequins and heavy velvet covers. These, by error ordered black, had to be corrected in scarlet by the Director of Sudan Stores and Ordnance. Taezaz and Wolde Giorgis had told me that the umbrella was an essential stock-in-trade without which the Emperor could never enter Ethiopia. But the Emperor was rather sensitive about the umbrella. It used to be carried after him in a

long box from which I had, at the last moment, removed the Director's inscription:

*A little gift, a puny thing
Meet for a small but royal head,
In gold and silver, laid on red,
Umbrella, one, in case, for King.*

I think that this sentiment was a relic of the Italo-Ethiopian war, when the Fascist cartoonist made great play of the umbrella and Italian airmen dropped Chianti bottles with the query whether the umbrella was adequate A.A. defence. For whatever reason, the umbrella was never unfurled, and the Emperor avoided the fate of Mr. Neville Chamberlain.

So the time passed in talks and encounters and the preparation of small things; as one eats bits of nut and sausage and fried potato before a dinner; but they could not take the place of the real meal. September drew to its end, the Blue Nile that flowed beyond the flowerless sandy garden of the Emperor's house was falling, the Sudanese were already poking seeds into the recovered ooze. Our first reinforcements from India had passed through Khartoum to the front, and our first artillery. There was talk of a possible enemy advance from Kassala, and one day Shallaka Kassa Abraha, another of the Emperor's battalion commanders in the old Guard and a pupil of St. Cyr, he who had planned in the first battle of the Tembien the only large Ethiopian success of the war of '36, abandoned the Italian battery at Om Hagger where he served as a common soldier and walked three days through the desert to our troops on the Atbara. He brought news of numerous colonial battalions coming down from Asmara, possibly for an offensive.

The day of Maskal came. On Maskal, the feast of the discovery of the true cross by St. Helen, the Ethiopians celebrate also the end of the rains and the coming of spring in various manners: with a dance of the priests and a military parade before the Emperor, with maypoles and skipping over fires and the wearing of the yellow Maskal daisy. At the end the Emperor and his grandees walk three times round the

principal maypole and set fire to it. Where it falls, there will be war in that direction that year. Afterwards there is a raw-meat feast or *gebir* for warriors, where honey-wine is drunk and bragging inevitably follows.

Perry Fellowes, a young Sudan irrigation engineer, had now joined our propaganda service, and together we tried to make Maskal mean something for the Emperor and the refugees. Armless and untrained, with Ethiopian flags tied to knotty poles, they marched in front of him. The maypole was a magnificent construction erected by the Sudan Forestry Department and carefully poised by cantileverous Perry to fall towards the Abyssinian border. A zealous refugee, untrained in geography, kicked it when it was burning, and it fell flat in the direction of Omdurman. In a great hurry we prophesied an English victory in Libya. The little man stood with utter patience for hours in front of a wooden throne upholstered in blue which we had bought for him from the property of an Italian internee, while his priests prayed and processed. Afterwards I found that this was the first public occasion of happiness that he had experienced since we left England. He knew that he could not get back yet, without bodyguard or arms or even a tent for himself; but he had celebrated for the first time for five years under his own flag the festival of his race, honoured and acknowledged by the leaders of the Army, Air Force, and Civil Service on his right hand. It meant something more serious than the tunics and decorations. It was the end, in practice, of his incognito and the beginning of his recognition. He had long since learned to press slowly and to bide his time.

Chapter VII

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ON 15 September a signal was captured by Khartoum in a familiar code. What many had believed impossible had been done. Dan had arrived in Gojjam unscathed, and was singing to us now from high on Mount Zibist. A lot of things had gone wrong, but there was nothing wrong with Dan.

He had crossed the frontier in the middle of August south of Gallabat, with Ronnie Critchley of the 12th Lancers as his staff officer and Clifford Drew of the Sudan Medical Service, so big, hairy, heavy and grinning that he had to be called Pansy, for the curing of Abyssinian wounds and diseases; there were two British N.C.O.s, about one hundred Ethiopian refugees, and stores on animals for about one month. An Abyssinian party armed with rifles and our propaganda had been scuppered by an enemy patrol going up the same track to Kwara a few days before, so Dan kept to the track by zigzagging to right and left across it. It was the worst season of the year to enter Abyssinia, therefore the most improbable, therefore the best. Therefore Dan at 58 did it.

His crablike approach to the centre of rebellion was justified early in September, when Lt. Wienholt, a 60-year-old Australian senator, philanthropist and tracker, with instructions to join Dan in Gojjam, bumped into another Italian patrol on the path itself and was last seen falling into the bush with his hand to his side. His escort dispersed and the Italians captured his papers and his helmet. Later we recovered some of his equipment. Perhaps he got sunstroke or died of thirst. The old fighter for justice to Abyssinia, who had written many articles for Sylvia Pankhurst's *New Times and Ethiopia News*, was not seen again.

Dan crossed the frontier escorted by a troop of the Sudan Defence Force, and at the first passage over the Italians' Metemma-Gubba track found enemy spoor only a few hours'

stale and some 50 strong. Returning his Sudanese, he threaded his way forward with a happy-go-lucky escort found by Lij Wandim Aganyu of Chabo, and Gerasmatch Redda of Chilga. Since the Emperor left Abyssinia most of the patriot leaders had given themselves lofty titles; but Redda remained the simple Gerasmatch, commander of the Left Wing, that he had been in '36, because as he said, "I will not rise while the war-drum of my Emperor is still overthrown."

The frontier was a dangerous area, man-high in grass and sprinkled with the villages of the Gumz, negroes unamharically lipped, who move their houses and their cultivation of maize and tobacco and the name of their village every few years to better soil, and who hunt in silent couples for buck and honey. The Gumz were a perfect political barometer. As the Italians had proved their superiority by taking Gallabat, which after Metemma was the biggest city in the whole world, the Gumz were now spying for the Italians. Sitting like monkeys in the forks of trees, they reported every convoy beating through the grass. Dan flushed two of them, but his mode of march baffled the Italians and he had no further contacts.

To his south there now rose the gigantic solitary tableland of Kwara, birthplace of the murderous and masterful Emperor Theodore, supported on distant black cliffs above the forested lowlands. Only one other tableland in this western, deserted Abyssinian plain can compare with Kwara. This was the massif of Belaya to the south, where the Emperor was finally to plant his flag. The two are detached guard-towers of the Ethiopian escarpment. But while Belaya was free, an Italian company of native troops held a neat brushwood fort on the top of Kwara, and disputed possession of this dizzy platform with one-eyed Kenyasmach Werku, Kwara's rightful chief, whom we had armed.

The track was a goat track, little used in the last five years of Abyssinian disorder, though formerly it had taken Robert Cheesman to his consulate on a mule and had been pocked with the hoof-prints of the Amhara merchant convoys coming down to trade with the Sudan. It wound through

high forest now, with scarcely a vista or a human soul, clinging for health to the sides and tops of ridges. Nevertheless by the time that Dan and his party had reached Sarako the Abyssinian armed escort had been rendered almost immobile by malaria, four mules had died of nigma, the horse sickness of the lowlands, and fifteen were knocked out with sore backs or lameness. None of the donkeys were of any more use because of sore backs. The wireless mechanic was down with fever and the doctor had just recovered from sciatica caused by swimming through the flooded rivers Bassmiel and Azohj, through which the naked head of the Mission had cheerfully ploughed his way with his General Staff uniform, red tabs and all, rolled up and poised like a native pot upon his hairless skull.

They rested a few days at Sarako, where they found their first few bulls to eat in a poor Amhara settlement. There were now thirty-five mules to carry the Mission on. So they had to split up.

Ronnie went off without any kit to Kwara. In three and a half days he had walked ninety miles, including the ascent of the tableland, and had collected the material of a first-class reconnaissance of the Italian fort. It could be reduced by bombing or by machine-gun and mortar fire. The level summit was with maize, millet, peas, meat, chillies, butter, milk and honey blest. Then he rejoined Dan.

Clifford Drew was to stay behind in Sarako as support to Werku, who was spoiling for a fight and would probably need a doctor. When Ronnie regained the camp in his long lazy strides, Dan and he left with one of the wireless sets for the escarpment.

For lack of transport, the Mission were now going to be separated for four months. Stores soon ran out with Clifford, who lived for the rest of the time on maize-pap.

Yet in spite of their difficulties the Mission had already scored notable successes. They had been present as a proof of British aid when the Emperor's first decree was ceremonially read to the people of Sarako and Kwara, and at the old monastery of Mahbera Sellassie where the religious had withdrawn to suffer a life of austerity and solitary contem-

plation far from the upland hustle of Gojjam, where the villages sprout among the cornfields at every half-mile. But solitude had not spared the monks of Mahbera Sellassie a visit from Italian bands who burned and massacred during the Gojjam revolt; many holy persons, therefore, were on the war-path too, in a country where a priestly ally is worth a dozen others.

From Sarako to the escarpment was a harder haul. There were two big flooded rivers to cross, the Shinfa and the Sid, and stiff hills to be surmounted in the first three days. Half the remaining mules broke down, and half the baggage had to be discarded with them. The hours of daylight oscillated between blinding rainstorms and intense heat; at the river Balas the expedition plugged and sucked its way through heavy marsh. At last at the end of the first week in September they were at the base of the Alefa escarpment, part of the great westward-facing shelf that holds the lands of the Amhara above the rest of Africa. They climbed it by a side track not scanned by the Italian *Bande*, and on 9 September they were at the top of Zibist, muddy, torn and sore, with 11 mules surviving from the long convoy that left the Sudan 28 days back, but only 100 miles to the west across the twisted furry plain. Fitorari Ayelu Makonnen, the loyal chief of this area, was hurrying back from a cattle-fight with a pro-Italian brother to welcome Dan.

Dan had one good night's sleep. Next morning at 8 a.m. an Italian aircraft came low over the camp, and circled for three hours. At midday 500 Italian colonial troops with two pieces of artillery could already be seen on the summit of Debra Sina. Colonel Torelli, the commander of the native brigade at Dangila (where he lived in Robert's old consulate) had heard of the arrival of the Englishmen at Sarako, divined their objective and had come to stop them.

Perhaps it was lucky that most of the mules had been abandoned. Fitorari Ayelu put into action his usual plan. While some of his men sniped and delayed the Italian column, the rest drove their cattle from the Achefer plateau where they graze down the ravines leading to the low country, and then sat down wrapped in their shammas, the colour of rock

and earth, at the head of the ravines to wait for the enemy to present his flank or rear. Dan and the Mission themselves cached their baggage train in a cave 800 feet below the lip of the escarpment next morning, and waited on events.

Events were not slow. By 10 o'clock the same morning the enemy was directly above their wireless set and the same aircraft was prying low. Ayelu's men were taken aback by the speed of Torelli (who always came out on these expeditions in person) and advised Dan to get right down to the villages at the foot of the scarp. The guide lost the way. Dan, a heavy man for all his agility, sweated himself blind into his spectacles in the precipitous scramble. They were in full view of the Italians, who followed them with machine-gun and rifle fire and lobbed grenades on to the rocks above them. It was a remarkable escape from disaster that Dan recognised when he polished his glasses at the bottom.

Fortunately now Torelli's men were at their usual sport of rounding up the cattle left in Achefer. The high drama of the Ethiopian revolt often degenerated into clannish details like this. A hurried note was sent to the great patriot chief Dedjasmach Mangasha, Ayelu's overlord, asking him to convey the Mission safely to Guta his headquarters. Mangasha moved rapidly with his feudal levies—for he was the hereditary Ballabat or territorial lord of Achefer—and the Italian colonel retired, Roman way.

The only white officer left to the Mission (for he had posted Ronnie off to the desolate mass of Belaya on a second reconnaissance as soon as the shooting was over), without his wireless set which he had stored in Zibist, Dan now completed the last leg of his journey in drizzle and in dignity. A great escort of Ethiopian patriots shadowed him about in the Achefer plateau, and across the Italian main road between Dangila and Bahrdar Giorghis, until they came to the most sacred stream of Gojjam, the Gish or Little Abbai, that flows into Lake Tana and by the Ethiopian computation is the source of the entire Blue Nile. Here a tall dignified figure, cloaked and grizzled like a Saxon king, was waiting for him with a numerous concourse. It is good manners in Ethiopia for the host to come part of the way to welcome his gentle

guest, to ask him if the journey has been comfortable, if he has been well fed and watered, if he has passed enjoyably during the year the wet season and the dry. Before 700 armed men and himself, whom Dan in his report described as a "wet and shivering Mission," the Emperor's Proclamation was read, and followed by a terrific blaze of fire from the Dedjasmach's two captured heavy machine-guns and a group of lighter automatics. With this wild salute Dan had reached his journey's end. They fed in the smoky light of torches and tapers.

He had now an opportunity to watch at close hand the rebellion in Gojjam which he had followed in Cairo during the past year. He was able to go south and see the young Dedjasmach Nagash, the loyalist from the family of Ras Hailu and therefore of the ruling house of Gojjam, and to try to get the two leaders to combine in punctual operations against the Italians. There was a jigsaw of innumerable jealousies of great and little chiefs to settle, and many a joint manœuvre had sadly to be postponed. But on 24 October 1940, Dan and the Emperor's representative Azaj Kabada got the two overlords, the old and the young, under the green-yellow-red standard of their independence, to set their heavy seals to the following pact:

"1. We hereby give our word for the love of our country and of our Emperor to leave all the differences that exist between us and to co-operate in our work in such a way that we shall be able to fight our enemy properly.

"2. Realising our dispute does not bring us to any final conclusions we shall cease from raising any question of dispute until the return of our Emperor.

"3. Beginning from today we shall refuse to accept an *arbenya* (*patriot* or *hero*) who deserts one and goes to the other.

"4. We are hereby bound to cease from interfering in each other's territory.

"5. Finally we, standing under our Flag, swear not to raise any question of dispute that might bring about disunity."

Mangasha and Nagash, though they both had feudal status, were really the figure-heads of a popular revulsion. When Gojjam had taken arms four years back against the Italians and shattered all their garrisons except that of Debra Markos, Gojjam was leaderless except for a small coterie of ex-Imperial officials who knew that they had not the standing to keep the people for ever with them. They therefore called out Mangasha the lord of Achefer, and Nagash the cousin of Hailu, to leave the Italian prison and lead them. Mangasha and Nagash, therefore, were always the instruments of popular feeling, and had to see that both their people and their leading Fitoraris or lieutenants were satisfied before they took any main initiative. This was particularly true of Nagash, who was only thirty-two and had been something of a playboy before the Italians invaded Ethiopia. He did not feel strong enough to order his chiefs about and therefore fell on the typical, stultifying Ethiopian alternative, to divide and rule them. To their natural jealousies he added a new ingredient, the passions stirred by his own varying policy.

Chiefs and men would play off one Dedjasmach against the other. That was why Dan and Azaj Kabada imposed clause 3 of the solemn compromise.

The significance, in military terms, of the democratic basis for the revolt was that every plan had to be divulged by the Dedjasmatches to their fighting men and their approval sought, with inevitable publicity and delay. Dan calculated that the Italians knew every patriot movement three days after it had been thrashed out in conference, and must have thanked God for the double bluff vouchsafed unto his missionary; for the chiefs very seldom executed what they had intended. None the less, the two essentials of a guerrilla campaign, surprise and speed, were always lacking. Italian espionage penetrated everything; many spies were known by the great chiefs, who did not punish them because they did not wish to lose their family support.

Jealousy of this kind had also driven many into the enemy camp. Chiefly these disputes arose over the exact bound-

aries of land and of chieftainly authority. Thus Lij Aberra, an Ethiopian who had done admirably in the Gojjam revolt, and quarrelled with Dedjasmach Mangasha on a question of sovereignty, had his quarrel composed in '39 by Lorenzo after three days of negotiation when the two sets of retainers faced each other in line of battle; a sub-chief did not desire this accommodation and ordered his men to fire, the infection of musketry caught the whole front, Lij Aberra went over temporarily to the Italians and was now being flown by them over Mangasha's headquarters, which he was only too keen to pinpoint. Yet this same Lij Aberra was at heart loyal to the Emperor, and was to join him at once when he entered Gojjam.

The patriots' mode of warfare was also unexpected.

Though they could destroy bridges and create obstacles on the roads, they were by now unwilling to ambush effectively large Italian columns as they moved along the main communications of Gojjam. When the Italian came out, the patriot's first thought was for his wife and family. When he had driven these off to a place of safety and the enemy had entered his village, burned down his house, stolen his grain and honey, and broken his cooking pots, the patriot returned and harassed the enemy on the way back to their fixed defences. He presented a supple front to the Italian, and by winging a few flank guards, usually collected a few rifles from every hostile raid. He kept in Gojjam the sum of sixteen colonial battalions, four Blackshirt battalions and two regular *Bande* groups, not to mention the irregular *Bande* armed by the Italians and belonging to the territorial chiefs who still professed loyalty to the enemy. But he was quite incapable of interfering effectively with their strategic distribution and with the movement of reserves.

Yet the anti-Italian population of the countryside lived on the whole the normal life of immemorial Ethiopia. They freely tended their flocks and herds and cultivated their lands. The only difference from the past was that now they paid no taxes; but they still victualled the fighting men of the Dedjasmatches as they passed through the country. Also the breakdown of a central administration in the Gojjam

had greatly increased the number of *fannos* or franc-tireur bands who appeared like jackals on the fringe of every quarrel and robbed whatever they could lay their cowardly hands upon. Though the population would not take vigorous steps against the Italian, Dan found that they longed for the return of the Emperor with power to re-establish law and order.

For the colonial troops and the *Bande* who remained with the Italians Dan found that the Emperor's Douglographed decrees were not enough. Torelli himself lined up the garrison of Dangila and had the decree read to them; when the Amharic voice had finished he commented, "Very good indeed; but did they drop them from aircraft?" For the Italian native garrisons Italy was still invincible and desertion would probably mean that one would be stripped of one's rifle and trousers by the *fannos*. If the Emperor actually showed himself, and the English clearly had aircraft, then one might think of changing sides. Until then Italian stories that the Emperor was dead and the English were feeble held the floor for lack of opposition.

For these reasons Dan asked for two things; aircraft and the Emperor. He asked for raids with bombs and propaganda on Dangila and Enjabara forts in particular, and for the rapid entry of the Emperor with the bodyguard of 3,000 that he had proposed at Wadi Halfa. Critchley returned from Belaya with the news that no aerodrome was feasible there, but that the mountain was highly defensible and would be an excellent store base.

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During the next month and a half plans for combined operations by the two Dedjasmatches whose objective would be the freeing of communication with the Sudan fell through, for various reasons. First, the caravan that had seen the Emperor at Gedaref had to be escorted up to the plateau; its men, most of whom were ridden with fever, had to be sent to their homes for a fortnight to recover their health and to propagandise the presence of the Emperor with the photographs that they carried. Secondly, Torelli came

out in a last wild expedition up and down the road between Dangila and Lake Tana, with the object of preventing Mangasha from leaving his district and attacking the rather ambiguous pro-Italian chiefs who lived west of the Lake in the peaceable country of Alefa, rich in cows. And then Dan had to go off to Eastern Gojjam, where nobody yet believed a word about the Emperor's return or even, until Dan turned up, that there were British officers some fifty miles to the west of them. News mobilised as slowly as Ethiopian armies. And no more supplies were arriving from the Sudan, although Shallaka Misfin had been awaited for weeks with his munitions and his food. The Mission was out of cash; in the end, Great Britain had to borrow 3,000 Maria Theresa dollars from Dedjasmach Nagash in order to keep Dan's head above water.

Yet there were compensatory moments. On 21 October the Wellesleys of 47 (Bomber) Squadron, R.A.F., for the first time penetrated the rebel interior of Ethiopia and dropped their bombs on the aerodrome at Bahrdar Giorgis, at the southern end of Lake Tana. They went on to bomb Dangila and Enjabara, and soon they were going to bomb Burye. "The powerful English aviation will overthrow the positions of the enemy"; this phrase in the Emperor's proclamation was being at last confirmed. Drew reported that other Wellesleys had bombed Kwara. Something almost like a physical thrill ran through Gojjam. The English had aircraft! Torelli would have to think of new explanations.

And then, out of the blue a month later, a Vincent settled on a bush aerodrome near Dan's headquarters, piloted with an accuracy that earned its commander the Distinguished Flying Cross. Wingate got out, to tell Dan that great decisions had been taken in Middle East; the movement would no longer starve and wither for lack of material support in money, in arms, in cadres, in transport, in trained troops and in the Emperor's presence. A real attempt to force the door open at Metemma with an Indian Brigade had only half succeeded; so they would switch now to the southern route from Roseires to Belaya. This was Dan's

cloud, no bigger than an obsolete biplane. But Dan in his unquenched buoyancy recognised that the months of drought were over, when no more than 1,000 rifles had been brought to the centre of revolt in Gojjam and Britain's representative lived as an undischarged bankrupt.

Chapter VIII

THE ROUT OF ROLLE

DURING September the Sudan had been reinforced with two Indian Brigades. These, a system of fake camps, dumps and tracks which aimed at the deception of the Italian air reconnaissance, and the natural timidity of the Italians saved the Sudan from disruption. They piled troops into their frontier areas, but never moved out of them. Except once.

Early in October I was in Headquarters at Khartoum when a signal came through to Intelligence from Roseires. It stated that several large columns of the enemy had crossed the frontier south of the Blue Nile and north of Kurmuk, making north-west. Later messages had us evacuating the advanced police posts of Keili and Bikori, some twenty miles from the frontier. Then the District Commissioner at Wisko in the Ingessana Hills (so named because it is near a settlement called Soda) burned his papers and withdrew to Roseires. Enemy columns appeared near Wisko, seemingly very short of water, and one of the Ingessana, an idyllic race, found an Italian grenade which he conceived to be a money-box, chopped it in two with his axe and so blew himself and his mother up. Larger columns arrived on the southern bank of the Blue Nile and moved westward along it; others were heard tramping north up the sand of the dry river bed of the Khor Offat, under enormous trees, to its junction with the Blue Nile only a few miles south of Roseires. In Roseires we had a few dozen police, and Roseires seemed to be the goal of this convergent mysterious expedition of whose figures and armament we knew nothing, but whose spoor was everywhere in this desolate land.

We could not afford to lose Roseires. They had already done their best to stop our convoys to the Gojjam by the only alternative track south of Gallabat.

The Sudan Frontier Battalion, raised in 1940 to protect the convoys into Abyssinia as Dan had explained at Wadi

Halfa, was the only reserve that the Sudan possessed. Even so it had not finished its training. The Kaid took the nearest two companies and the commanding officer, Miralai Boustead Bey, and sent them down to fill the gap at Roseires.

I had long been looking for a chance to go into the field. Our shortage of aircraft and the impossibility of finding convoys to Gojjam made me look for other ways of getting propaganda to the enemy. Defensive propaganda was better than nothing. We had at last got a printing press, and I had been working out the rudiments of a field propaganda system by which megaphones, bogus commands and visual symbols dear to the Abyssinian might be used in battle itself. I was allowed to go down to Roseires with Shallaka Kassa Abraha and an old ex-governor of the Emperor's, Dedjasmach Adefressu, who was authorised to enter into secret communication with the enemy on the Emperor's behalf if the enemy's position became static. Ronald Matthews, the correspondent of the *Daily Herald*, also accompanied us; which was all to the good because not only did Ronald have a pretty wit, but he was the only one who remembered to bring any food in the rush.

We took train to Sennar and from there got the only remaining military lorry, whose driver lost his way and took us into the Dinder Game Reserve. It was a long dusty drive of a day and a half down the eastern bank of the Blue Nile, where the bush was flashed only by green bee-eaters and blue rollers in flight, and grew thicker and taller as we drew nearer to Roseires, the old trading post of the Fung for Abyssinian slaves, gold, ivory and coffee. There on the aerodrome was Johnny the Australian pilot with the first Gauntlet that Roseires had ever seen; he had flown all over the dense grasslands and forest to the south of the Blue Nile and he could not see a thing; he was also browned off because there was neither ice nor beer in Roseires.

Hugh Boustead had made contact with the enemy on the Khor Maganza, a few miles off, and was chasing them upriver with the only available transport, ten broken-down market lorries from Wad Medani, hired with their Sudanese drivers and without approval from Headquarters at seventy-five

piastres a day apiece. But the great expeditionary force commanded by Colonel Rolle, 1,500 strong as we later found from deserters that it was, had quite enough marching without water and loot along the Khor Offat, and was now going back to Abyssinia burning the villages in its path. Hugh Boustead's lorries faded in the hard going, and the road-blocks that the Sudan Police had put up now operated against us. Johnny, hovering in the air at midday, had seen the Miralai's disconsolate brown box-car coming back to headquarters at Kharaba, across the Blue Nile. There were to be a few false alarms, but the Rolle offensive was over.

Roseires, later the base of the Ethiopian patriot offensive, possessed the pernicious charm of other African backwaters where malaria is chronic and trees are green. It had one telephone and two cars, and sprawled behind decorative brush stockades over half a dozen small hills scanning the Blue Nile. There were heavy double-storeyed houses scaling white paint that had once billeted a larger administrative staff than today. Everything moved slowly in Roseires except the mind of Geoffrey Hancock, the District Commissioner, the most able frontier officer that I have met. He was also the only fan in hot Roseires. You just looked at him, sweatless, collected and thin in his white spongecloth uniform under the brilliant Bimbashi's shoulder straps, writing ceaselessly beside a porous water-jug, and you felt cool.

Big baobab trees lifted their hollow pillars over Roseires to give a shade for the degenerate feverous Galla water-carriers to sleep beside their dented petrol tins. The splendid bee-eaters slanted green across the rich russet bark of the tall trees. Ingessanas, noble smiling savages, had come in to buy brass and were resting also. A few police with spindly legs were drilling gently under a British officer, and a doped Galla deserter lay in squalor on a verandah. Beneath the avenue on the river's bank, where marketers had waited without protest two hours for the ferry, was Hancock's motor-boat, painted bright emerald like a basking water-snake. It was unlike Khartoum.

Hugh, who would rush a tortoise into a sweat, came across the river that night and had his regular hot bath in Geoffrey's house. With soap in his ears he listened to my plans for defensive propaganda. Contact with the enemy in the field now seemed to be a vanishing prospect, but there was always the possibility that he would come again. Hussein, the bright Sudanese deserter whom Rolle had used as his guide in the Khor Offat, had told us that this was a reconnaissance in force only; he said that 10,000 more troops were being assembled at Asosa in the negro lands across the frontier for the final capture and sack of Roseires. It stood to reason that they would continue to build up forces on this frontier, if only to stop the arms caravans that we were beginning to send to Taffere Zalleka at Belaya.

For, until the Rolle expedition turned back looting and burning, sick and waterless, clinging for life to the banks of the Blue Nile, the Italian had the upper hand on this frontier. His forays and his propaganda had alike succeeded. It had begun with his capture of Kurmuk, but its roots were deeper than that. Its roots were in the hatred which the Watawit bore the British.

Watawit is the Arabic plural for *Bat*, and the Watawit are so-called by the negroid tribes around Roseires because they are bastards in more senses than one. They have wings but they do not lay eggs, they are mammals and yet they fly. In roundabout English they are not fish nor fowl nor good red herring.

A hundred years or more ago they came down into this kingdom of the Fung (whose salaried dynasts now go around in Ford V.8's carrying umbrellas), and then they were more or less Arab. Their objects were slaves and gold; they intermarried with the population, and soon established that hold upon them that the Nazi attributes to the Jew. You find them today trading in every village among the black tribes of these parts—the Berta, the Hamej, the Shankalla; they have often provided the ruling families, for they are much more intelligent than the indigenous folk who have cut the villages out of the dense jungle round Roseires.

They bear the British an old grudge because we suppressed the slave trade. Did we not arrest the great Sitt Amna, wife of Sheikh Hojali the ruler of Abyssinian Beni Shangul, in spite of the love that he bore her in his old age and in spite of her own wizened dignity? The bloody British caught the good lady on their own side of the border and jailed her for long years in Wadi Halfa, just because she was the staple of a commerce in black flesh. The Italians were much kinder; they, who had come to Ethiopia to save her from the slave-markets of Haile Sellassie, allowed the Bats to do what they liked.

When Kurmuk was captured the Italian command persuaded the Bat rulers on their side of the border to write to the Bat rulers on ours, commending the role of Mussolini as Protector of Islam and pointing to the invincibility of Italian arms. We suffered serious defections, and at one time it seemed that this propaganda would reach across the undefended plains as far as the White Nile. Geoffrey Hancock had only a handful of police and he had to take grim measures. Two Watawit caught scattering Italian Arabic pamphlets on the roads near Roseires were shot in his prison. This stern deed, though it disturbed the peace of mind of higher Sudan officials, did for a time redress the balance. Then Rolle came out of the blue, to exploit the channels that his letter-writers had cut for him. There were Bats in all the villages along the Blue Nile, at Nuweiri and Abu Sheneina and Abu Gemai, ready to help Rolle, as our junior officers discovered; there was a complete fifth column ready in the Blue Nile province of the Sudan.

Therefore, though Rolle had failed, he might come again. I wished to make contact with his Amhara and Galla troops if he did return. I had come down with thousands of the Emperor's pamphlets prepared to suit the eyes of men who would have done another long waterless march into detestable grass lowlands, to face in the end the small but compact phalanx of the Frontier Battalion and the coolness of Geoffrey and Hugh. One could meet them by dropping the stuff in its yellow vivid hundreds round the waterholes; leaving it in the huts that they would loot, where they could read or

have it read to them without the interference of their Italian officers; pinning it up on trees along roads and tracks a mile deep in front of our road-blocks and scattering it behind bushes on either side where they would take cover from our fire. Hugh agreed to this, and took Ronald Matthew and me across the river in the morning.

We were determined to be thorough, and to cover all the approaches to Roseires. One route would be from Kurmuk to Keili, and thence through the Ingessana Hills. The second would be the Khor Offat. The third would be from north of Kurmuk to Bikori, thence to the Blue Nile and so through the villages to Kharaba. The fourth was along the eastern bank of the Blue Nile from the fords opposite Abu Sheneina, where De Bunsen and his police patrol had escaped in cockleboats and floating rafts of grass, and had listened all night to the cries of molested women and the clucking of pilfered fowls.

Our first visit was to the Ingessana Hills, where Hugh was going to blow the road in a cutting. He led the way over the plain on which tall grass floated, after we had left the riverain tangle.

Hugh, I now noted, resembled an unleashed fox-terrier going down a street in which lamp-posts and open basement-gates abound. He dashed off at every strange thing, confirmed every reconnaissance himself, scrambled up every hill and prodded the bottom of every pool. He did what politicians always pretend that they do; he left no avenue unexplored and no stone unturned. He examined every native personally and exhausted us before our time. Hugh has had a zigzag career which corresponds in high strategy to his tactical behaviour. A midshipman at the beginning of the Great War, he found himself in the peaceable South Africa station; so after the *Koenigsberg* had been run aground he ran away and joined up as a private in the 1st South African Brigade under a false name, and went to France. His parents sought him for a year sorrowing, and after they had found him, and he had saved his own life and arrived alone at his objective in Delville Wood by very sensibly

disobeying orders, he was transferred to the Gordon Highlanders. This has always surprised me in the career of Hugh, for by rights he ought now to have gone into the Air Force. But he had a lot of fun in South Russia under Denikin ("the Russians are very like the Sudanese, old chap; tough as blazes, eat anything, put up with every kind of discomfort, march anywhere, a cheery lot"). Peace at last brought him out as an officer in the Sudan Defence Force, where he learned Arabic, tired of soldiering, and got into the Sudan Political Service. Here he developed a reputation as a great delayer of trains. At every station where he stopped to and from his district he spotted some Sudanese whom he knew and hopped out to have a chat; this Sudanese introduced him to another Sudanese, and there were besides the engine-driver and the guard, so the train just had to learn patience. In his leaves he climbed mountains, including Everest, whose summit he missed by about 2,000 feet. I once asked him about this mountain and he answered "Bloody cold, old boy, so cold you just couldn't think; and it made one feel bloody tired." Weariness must have been a new experience to Hugh. When war with Germany broke out he badgered the Kaid for service, and at last when War Office sanction dribbled over the official dam he was given command of the new Frontier Battalion in March 1940, and had recruited and trained it to the point of efficiency that it had reached in this October. A small man with twinkling legs and a gentle brown face creased superficially like a walnut, capable of talking anyone under the table in the most gentle and tentative of voices, Hugh must sometimes have slept, but can hardly have done so without a slight continuous motion of his lips and his feet.

We travelled towards the most Arcadian country in the Sudan, inhabited by a people who deserved the name Blameless that Homer lavished on the Ethiopians. There is nothing quite like the Ingessana outside the south seas.

Their hills are a freak outcrop of giant boulders piled one on top of the other to make an unfinished doll's house for the Ingessana. They themselves have pasted their particular

cells out of a grey camouflage plaster on to this substructure, like a law-abiding colony of weaverbirds or wasps.

But the Ingessana are superior to these social animals in that they have a sense of both humour and affection. When they see one they smile charmingly, one is not quite sure from which motive. Their skin is black and they are happy, but besides that they have few characteristics of the negro, for their features are regular and small like the mixture of Amhara and Galla that one meets in the Shoan countryside. They have their own tribal uniform which they do not abandon for the ways of Britain, Greece or Syria. Their long skirt or sarong is rolled tight over their buttocks and their hair is plaited back to fit the turn of their heads. Round their necks and plump, well-formed arms they wear thick plain bracelets and rings of bronze and a braided leather necklace with a sharp bronze bar pointing behind them and another long trailing necklace hanging in ingenious reverse down their backs. Their hair sometimes concludes in a Nelsonian queue, cased in leather and bronze. They carry two spears and balance on their easy shoulders, blade towards the sky, a magnificent curved and formal sword concave to the front of them. Their women are as free and sleek as they. They live round waterholes like dewponds in the rocks, ringed by the same grey clay as the sentry-boxes that they sleep in. We found among them Bill Davis, formerly Assistant Financial Secretary of the Sudan and about to become Governor of the White Nile Province, but now a simple Bimbashi, the lowest rank open to an Englishman in the Sudan Auxiliary Defence Force. Bill Davis is rather like the Ingessana, charming and approachable, every now and then stopping to dream. The Ingessana in their innocent way are asking for rifles to defend themselves against the Italian, but Bill Davis says that if you give them rifles they will run higher up into the rocks, like the monkeys. The Bill Davis conception of a road-block, we discovered, was equally rudimentary.

At Wisko, cupped in the hills, where we camped among the burnt papers of the D.C., an Ingessana messenger came running in next morning to say that the Italian army was

on us. We assumed a posture of defence along a crest, Hugh sitting on the topmost rock and scanning the horizon with his glasses. It was seven Galla irregulars of our own, returning from somewhere near Gambeila where they had fallen into the Italians and lost half their number before they ran home again. Then about midday, as we were lunching, another delightful open-faced savage came in and reported that the day before he had seen spoor of naked-footed troops in the Khor Maganza, a few miles to the south-east of Wisko, pointing towards the Blue Nile, but there were no boots and no hoof-marks; we concluded, stragglers. In the afternoon a message came in from Jock Maxwell, Hugh's Adjutant at Battalion Headquarters on the Nile, saying that another messenger, the companion of Ingessana No. 2, had seen masses of hooves and boots where his brother had seen none. It was all very Shakesperean and exasperating, this innocent heraldic coming and going of a tribe that was honestly doing its best.

We scattered paper liberally, and pinned it Rosalind-like to the great boles of trees, and left it in the row of locked shops that form the straight market-street of Wisko, including that cabin where the Greek trader, driven mad by the harmlessness of the place, had taken up his rifle and started picking off his neighbours' goats. Along the roads we laid a lemon-coloured paper-chase.

Young Credin, a Bimbashi raised from the Shell Company, was left in charge of the little circle of the Ingessana hills. While others talked he sat suppressed, self-conscious, shy and pink, like Journey's End or the new prefect at tea with the housemaster's wife. He had an independent command, to live in these hills and defend them to the end.

A mounted patrol of police went crackling off into the hardy grass that came like a sea up to the granite island of the Ingessanas, to thread their way down the Khor Maganza, their safety-catches at the ready and their pouches full of pamphlets.

We left black Paradise for the Blue Nile, on a fluttering yellow trail. That evening, after urgent conferences at the camp at Kharaba, we drove forward to the mouth of the

Khor Offat and slept in the grass. Enemy had been reported in the Khor, and a patrol had found others dead of thirst farther up. The drone and crumph of enemy aircraft bombing Roseires aerodrome woke us up; we distributed more paper to the heads of villages and to the less beautiful riverain negroes of these parts on their way to market, and we waited for an explanation.

The Gauntlet pilots, led by Johnny, were packing up for home when two old Caproni 133's came over and bombed their planes, missing them thoroughly. Johnny then raced out to the aerodrome—about seven miles along an earth-track—and as he arrived two Savoia 79's were overhead, so he went up to chase. This was an idle expedient, for the 79 is much faster than a Gauntlet, but Johnny restored our reputation in these parts by flying low over Roseires and waving his hand, and a few hours later the officer with whom I travelled had to deny to an enthusiastic old man at the roadside that we had shot *all* the enemy down.

I looked at the sky above. It was just a circle of brassy blue and no sounding board was visible upon it. The bush on either side was incredibly thick and ready for the fires that smoked into Israelitish pillars far away, from a horizon that could not be descried. The baobabs and tall thorns held a sunshade over the plaited heads of the elephant grass, but nowhere was there a precipice from which sound might be refracted. Yet the whole bush is an echo of distorted news, of exaggeration and plain nonsense, invented victories and phantom offensives which everybody, and above all the carrier, believes. Hugh's intelligence problem, now that all our police posts had been driven in, was very difficult; so it must be in all bush warfare.

The mules were brought up, and we ranged in a wide triangle, with Sudanese flank guards out in their soft thorn-socks of leather, over the lowest reach of the Khor Offat, marching through the villages of Araki and Nuweiri which the enemy had sacked. Here the millet tops had been wrenched away and the people driven out with as much of their cattle and chickens as they could save from the ravening Galla soldiery of Colonel Rolle, who in their eighty

miles' march up the Khor from the frontier had seen nothing on four legs or two. So they had looted the Watawit as well as the poorer negro farmers—the Watawit particularly, for they had more to offer. Their officers left behind in the charred stubble the usual trail of Imperial Italy, discarded cotton-wool and preventives from their field equipment.

We followed their path from one village to the other through burnt undergrowth, our mules switching the black ash up to settle on leaves that survived upon the thorn, while the yellow pamphlets drifted from our hands like enormous tropical butterflies planing through the shade. Fired and reeking though the ground was, the great Dom palms and tebedis and trees resembling our South African yellow-woods still cut off the sun and dappled our column, and the flank guards had always to be whistled closer as their heads bobbed out of view behind the resistant scrub. Like an Indian fakir, Africa is getting used to being burnt and composes her main features while the fire plays upon her skin.

Kassa and I heard good stories. There was the single Sudanese policeman who, with the bushcraft of his kind, had attacked 400 of the enemy single-handed and killed seven before he was drilled dead by an Italian officer with a machine-gun at fifty yards. Two spearsmen had collared an Italian flanker, tied him down to a grass raft and floated him across the Nile to De Bunsen. The Mek or petty king of Keili, himself a Watawit and suspected some time back of relations with the enemy, had turned against them and, after the departure of our frontier officer, shadowed and sniped their columns with his household bobtail, and sent in six captured rifles which had belonged only three months back, judged from the mark, to our Somaliland Police. Deserters and drifters were being rounded up, who told the same story of an ill-organised offensive, day after day spent without water, guides killed because the Italian command thought that they had cheated them, the column splitting through the bush in search of holes that were a mirage, men drinking their urine and being left behind, at last the wild dash to the Nile and looting withdrawal. We knew now that the *Bande Rolle* had become an undisciplined rabble, who had

run from the automatics of the Frontier Battalion at the first contact and by indiscriminate disorder were going to undo the whole of Italian propaganda in the placid lands between Blue and White Nile.

This was a great opportunity. I went back across the river to Geoffrey Hancock to consult with him. We waited two hours for the ferry, while Hugh beguiled the time with stories on the river's brim. Messengers came to report the seizure of our pamphlets "as only the Italians write propaganda." Upriver feluccas were loading the camel transport of the Frontier Battalion with senile deliberation and shunting them gently on to a sandspit on our side; by the end of the morning twenty-two had got across. There were a party of British signalmen playing cards in a hut behind us. One with a squeaky voice told us that they would be going back to Headquarters next morning and after that there would be no connection between Roseires and Kharaba by telephone because it was magnetophone across the river and buzzer up the Kharaba bank, and the two didn't connect unless there was somebody there to turn a handle. Another illuminating point was that their instructions were to *maintain* the line, which did not mean, in their view, that they should prevent bushfires from attacking and burning it. Yet another was that the line was guaranteed to last only 14 days in the sun or 2 under water. On such delicate skeins did our defence of Roseires depend. But Hugh, swinging his legs over the bank, took it philosophically. Things went slower in the past. Once there was a gong on this western side, which a functionary beat if somebody wanted the ferry to go to Roseires. He beat it once for a Nafar (private in the Sudan Defence Force), twice for an Ombashi (two stripes), thrice for a Shawish (three stripes), six for an Uzbashi (captain) and twelve for a Bimbashi (major or lieutenant-colonel). The ferry came across at speeds appropriate to their rank. Then one day a European Prince in gorgeous uniform came down from Abyssinia in the first car to do so, and the functionary beat the gong without ceasing. "Drunk again," they said on the other side of the river, and the Prince had to spend a night in the bush.

I thought that we would have to do so too, but at last a movement was detected in the town of Roseires. Hugh drove a policeman off the tiller and with semi-comical commands got the boat at record speed to the other bank. He would have done it even if he had never been a midshipman.

In Roseires everybody except Geoffrey and the better folk was drunk because it was the feast of the Eid following Ramadan. A more than usual deathly stillness lay over the green town, broken only at 3 p.m. by the arrival of a lorry for me from Sennar, a rare event which occasioned the ringing of the air-raid alarm bell at the Merkaz and the removal to ditches of all those who were not already lying there motionless. It was an ideal atmosphere of calm in which to discuss the future of our frontier propaganda and of penetration from Roseires into the Gojjam. The reverse to Rolle might be the turn of the Italian offensive tide, which had already slackened farther north.

Geoffrey's policy had already borne fruit. The hillmen Berta of Abu Ramle, due east of Roseires across the Abyssinian frontier, in a good position north of the Italian post at Gubba, had heard of our despatch of arms to Taffere Zalleka and sent a deputation to Geoffrey asking him for 500 rifles. They arrived just in time to hear of Rolle's defeat, and reported discontent and fever in the garrison at Gubba. Geoffrey liked them, saw in a typical flash their honesty, and got permission from Khartoum to equip them. In a few weeks' time they had destroyed a corporal's patrol and sent in his stripes as proof of it; after that the Italians' 2nd Bande Group in Gubba (about a battalion strong) ceased to leave its camp in a northerly direction.

The two objectives of our future propaganda were obviously these: to exploit the Rolle disaster and the sack that followed it—for the Galla had burned all the markets on their way back to Abyssinia—in order to finish for good the Italian propaganda with the Watawit; to concentrate on and terrorise the garrison at Gubba. Like all others in war, propaganda is a weapon of co-operation; ours against Gubba must be supported by constant patrol and irregular activity,

and by bombing from the air. Our joint efforts in Khartoum secured this.

The abandonment of Gubba by the enemy was the major strategical aim. We had not the forces to do it so we must try to do it by fright. Once Gubba was lost—

(1) The enemy would be unable to reopen the old patrol-road between Gubba and Metemma, and so to interfere with our arms convoys to the patriots;

(2) The motor-road from Roseires to Gubba would be open, and from thence one would be able to follow the trace made by the White Corporation of America past the southern cliffs of Belaya to the Gojjam—the only route, after months of effort, dead camels and broken cars, that was ever found feasible for army supply.

I promised Geoffrey a fortnightly Arabic news-sheet written simply and a little coarsely to satisfy provincial taste; to tickle up the Watawit, get pushed into Beni Shangul and Gubba, and be not too political to be incomprehensible to the small gaggle of literates on Abu Ramle.

When I got back to Khartoum I found that the Gallabat offensive had been put forward to first light next morning. A whole Indian Brigade was to be used, and a company of cruiser and light tanks. The Kaid planned to break both Gallabat and Metemma in a rapid stroke and so to open the northern arms route to the patriots in Gojjam. Dan had been asking for Metemma in every report.

Our tanks were terribly brittle. They carried Gallabat and broke up on the ridge. We could not carry Metemma. The Italian Air Force established for the last time in its history against Britain a local superiority, and actually bombed British infantry out of Gallabat. Enemy losses were very heavy, but it was they who could reinforce.

Failure at Gallabat made it doubly essential to open the southern arms route from Roseires. I had to write something that made our recent offensive seem to be a success (for nobody near Roseires would know that it was anything else); a success at least in comparison with the tergiversation of Rolle. Mamur Omar Effendi el Amin, a sound outspoken old Sudanese who had reached the highest ranks in the civil

service, had already been attached to my office for the interrogation of deserters, and together, he puffing at a pipe that must have contravened all the laws of war framed since time immemorial against the poisoning of one's neighbour, we wrote on pink paper the following Epistle to the Bats:

PEOPLE OF ROSEIRES, GUBBA AND ASOSA,

We bring you good news to cheer your hearts.

The English army, supported by the newly armed forces of the Emperor Haile Sellassie, have with a furious torrent of bombs shells and tanks carrying great guns utterly destroyed the Italian garrison of Gallabat and razed Metemma to the ground.

The famous 27th Battalion of the Beni Amer in which the Italians put such confidence has been shot to pieces and has lost all its artillery and the anti-tank guns manned by the Italian garrison of Addis Ababa, the Savoy Grenadiers, who protected its flanks.

In a desperate attempt to save the 27th the Italian commanders in Metemma sent out the 25th and 77th Battalions of Askaris to fight the English and the Sudanese. But these two battalions had lost heart when they saw the English shells falling like hail among the 27th, and they put up a feeble resistance. They lost half their number.

Losing its head completely, the Italian command withdrew all native troops from Metemma which was being ploughed up by the British artillery. As the Italians themselves in spite of all their boastings had not a single gun left to them which had the range to answer to the English, they withdrew to two mountains behind Metemma called Jebel Wuha Mariam and Jebel Negus, where they now live the life of monkeys in the rocks, chased by the hunter.

The only difference between them and the monkeys is that the monkeys have the pleasure of the company of female monkeys and can find enough food and water to keep themselves alive each day. But to these unfortunate Abyssinians, betrayed by their Italian tyrants who have not even the courage to lead them in battle, even these natural satisfactions common to all the animals are denied. Their water is a little cup each day. Their food lorries are shelled and burned by the English. They are now deserting at the rate

of over fifty a day, for fear of Italian cruelty cannot hold men who are in such an extremity.

So the door of Ethiopia is being hammered open, and the rebellion in Gondar and Gojjam grows apace, awaiting the arrival of the Emperor Haile Sellassie.

Compare the great weight and courage of this English offensive, in which English and Sudanese fought shoulder to shoulder, with the feebleness and cowardice of the Italian invasion of the Sudan last month from Asosa. Then Colonel Rolle, the chief of the Italian *Bande*, thought that it would be an easy thing to come to the Blue Nile and Roseires. But where are he and his *Bande* now?

Colonel Rolle, unlike the English at Gallabat, did not try to pin the English his enemies down, discover their positions and then smash them with a terrific show of force and bravery. He did not do so because, first of all, the Italians never try the direct attack which requires calm and coolness, but always try to sneak their way through. Secondly he did not do so because the Italian Government had not got guns and tanks like the English, nor had they got troops with the same willingness to attack, because the Galla whom they enlisted by force are poor wretched people untaught even to handle rifles, far less to face guns and tanks.

So Colonel Rolle sneaked into the Sudan by the Khor Offat, hoping that its trees would cover him and save him from the English aeroplanes and armies. By this means he overreached himself, because instead of killing the English he killed many of his own troops, taking them into a country where there was no water.

Indeed, many of them came to such a pass that they were obliged to drink their own urine, which even the monkeys do not do. The bones of four hundred of them now lie in the khors of the Sudan, testifying to the love which the Italians bear to their Abyssinian subjects.

The time came when Colonel Rolle was found out by the hawklike eyes of the English aircraft, when he was near the mouth of the Khor Offat where it enters the Blue Nile. Then the Sudanese troops came eagerly to attack him. But did Colonel Rolle stand his ground and fight?

He preferred to go back up the Blue Nile as fast as his troops could go to avoid the English armies, on the way pillaging

the villages of Nuweiri, Shaeira, Abu Gemai and Abu Sheneina because he had forgotten to give his troops enough food before they came out of Asosa.

Thus he proved that his master was the Protector of Islam as he pretends to be, by first of all taking under his Almighty Protection the chickens of the Mohammedans of the Sudan.

He ran so fast that the English could not catch him up, even though they were using motor transport and Rolle was going on foot. And now Colonel Rolle is back in Abyssinia, having lost a quarter of the poor dupes and forced soldiers who followed him into the Sudan.

Compare this with the Gallabat battle to see whether England, the Empire of a thousand years, or Italy, the Empire of a thousand lies, is the stronger.

Our aircraft have just sunk in the Italian naval base at Taranto three of the five Italian battleships who skulked in harbour and would not do battle with our fleet.

Our own warships have just shelled Mogadiscio in Italian Somaliland and blown up the petrol stores there. Our bombers have bombed Gondar and Bahrdar Giorgis, Massawa and Asmara, Assab and Diredawa.

The Italian Empire, strangled by the blockade of our fleet, moves gradually to its appointed end. Then you will be able to choose your own way of life, and will no longer be bullied and cheated by strangers. We come to give you food, and to make you free!

The pundits in Khartoum said that this was coarse and cheap and would not appeal to the Arab, who does not like the lower forms of sarcasm. I said that it was just the sort of stuff to suit Bats in the bush, and sent it down to Geoffrey Hancock. It was a great success on the frontier. He wrote that he was delighted, and after that we wrote (the Mamur puffing and chortling behind his gold-rimmed spectacles) a similar Arabic newsletter every fortnight. They went by hand right up to Asosa, the chief place of Beni Shangul.

We then got our teeth stuck into Gubba and did not let the town go.

Gubba is the chief place of a negro kingdom of that name, previously ruled by Dedjasmach Banja, Hamdan Abu Shok (to give his Abyssinian and his Arabic names) who owed

fealty to the Emperor Haile Sellassie. He was a man so enormous that he could not enter a touring car, and had to travel the steep gradients of his capital in the back of a lorry. When the Italians came he fled to the Sudan where he died in exile. His son had returned, to a mere shadow of his father's size and power.

At the foot of the little peak where Abu Shok's old house, now the Italian Commissariato, stood burnished white, lay the *Bande* huts, some 130, neatly dispersed in brushwood squares.

Gubba was bombed and propaganded on 14, 16 and 21 November; on the last occasion alone twenty-two troops deserted and the Commissario, wounded, was removed in an aircraft. The same poison in its sugar coating was administered to Gubba on 11, 12, 30 and 31 December. Our theme, rammed home as all good propaganda must be, was always the same. We said in Amharic and Arabic, under the joint arms of the British and the Ethiopian Empires, that the garrison if it did not desert were doomed to die by disease and by bombing; that it was encircled by hostile tribesmen whom we were arming; that our Sudanese patrols and armed convoys were passing Gubba freely and would compass its downfall; that all good Hamej folk of the old people of Abu Shok, who had excellent relations with the Sudan before, should quietly evacuate their material and get into touch with us, because we were going to destroy Gubba utterly. The principle of this propaganda was that it seized on data already known to the people and garrison of Gubba—arming of the Hamej, our patrols, fever, bombs—and built them into a complex of fear entirely unjustified by the material means that we could in fact have mobilised against Gubba. Command and troops by the beginning of January were as convinced as Snow-white in the forest that they were surrounded by enemies. They clamoured for reinforcements from the south, which never came. Then they broke and fled east, leaving the lower door to Gojjam wide open.

We had rumours of the evacuation from traders in Gubba with whom Geoffrey was corresponding. I thought that we

should get in at once with economic propaganda, for the western districts of Ethiopia were short of salt and cloth, kerosene and matches. So on 8 January the Mamur and I took off in two Vincents from Khartoum, and while one of them circled over Gubba dropping pamphlets to disarm any enemy who might be there, we landed on the rough aerodrome. Our plane then took off and flew with the other to bomb Wanbera, leaving us alone in Gubba for an hour and a half.

Our passports were: long-range, a large Ethiopian flag which we stretched between us as we advanced into the town shouting, the Mamur in Arabic and Berta, I in Amharic, that we were friends come only to provide food and all things nice; short-range, a bag of 500 silver Maria Theresa thalers, very heavy, and a letter from the Emperor declaring his sovereignty over Gubba. We could find only dead men round a burning foodstore, row upon row of empty huts papered with Italian medicines and propaganda, mulepacks with the ropes still upon them discarded at the last moment, the blue and yellow flag of the *Bande* Group forgotten on the striped pole outside the C.O.'s house, and best discovery of all, the finest maps in all Italian East Africa, the 1:50,000 scale collection from Agordat to Massawa that we were going to use in a month's time for the battle of Keren. It was a panic withdrawal, just completed. The loneliness of the village, its peaks and wide roads and closed offices, lying there in the stark sunlight, was a monument to the terror that we had caused; and in itself so incongruous as to be almost alarming. One connects solitude with grey skies, broken castles, the Gothic splendour of cliffs; not with the sunny intimacy of an African village. The Mamur said he was sure that we were being watched as we hauled down the *Bande* flag and ran up the Ethiopian, and pinned the Emperor's letter to the C.O.'s door. I was not so psychic. He was right. There were dozens of Gubba folk in the bush, uncertain whether this was an Italian ruse. We left them their Arabic news-sheet and retired, having occupied the first Italian post in the East African campaign and shown that propaganda has a role in victory.

Chapter IX

BANDERACHIN

BACK in Khartoum Perry Fellowes was meanwhile publishing *Banderachin*, the first airborne newspaper of the Axis war. For now we had our printing press, and even before it was ours to play with, we had gained by induction a certain number of ideas.

The number of deserters had increased. We asked them why they had deserted. Their answer almost one hundred per cent. was the same: *because we wish to die* (the Ethiopian is a dramatist, he always says *die* when he means *fight*) *Negusachin Banderachin—for our King and our Flag*. The phrase rang in one's ears. We had always believed in organising propaganda from the bottom up, from the contact with the fighting man whether he was Italian askari or patriot, from the particular to the general. That was why we were so slow in starting. But if a barrel organ keeps on playing the same tune in your ears day after day, in the end you hum it unconsciously, however dumb you are. So it was with *Banderachin Negusachin*.

We asked them what the colours of their Flag were, and they found it very difficult to explain, though the Ethiopian and especially the Ethiopian deserter is quick and intelligent. The snag was that the Ethiopian language is not rich in terms for colour—there is pale and there is dark and there is red, and that is about all. Perry therefore ran off to a paint-shop in Khartoum and bought a paint-scale, which he showed to them, saying *Pick them out*. But even then some of them failed, not because they were colour-blind but because they just didn't know that the Ethiopian Flag was green, yellow and red. They had been boys when Italy conquered their country. They knew only that it once had a King and a Flag of its own, which gave it a certain dignity and them a certain status of civilisation. But nobody had allowed them to see a representation of either.

Italy herself in her stupid way had been responsible in

part for this. She had never ceased to talk about the Italian Flag and the Flags of her colonial battalions and *bande*. One lived only to fight and die for a flag. That appealed to the excitable sense of honour and pride of the young Amhara; but both in him were so overweening that, in spite of the great defeat which he had suffered at their hands, he still despised the Italians as he had done after Adowa in 1896. To talk of flags simply put ideas of a flag for himself into his head.

The Italians had a pamphlet newspaper for their troops, distributed by hand, called *The New Ethiopia*. Such a form, with improvements, seemed to us convenient. One cannot for ever go on exhorting people to do the same thing as one exhorted them to do before, such as to remember Italian cruelties, notice the short commons on which they live, observe that Italian East Africa is blockaded and will be starved out, and desert to us. Nor with a hand-set press, as ours was and every Amharic press must be, can one continually be issuing different material on similar themes to askaris and patriots, civilians who have to toe the Italian line because they are near their forts, and civilians who are so far away that they do not care a rap.

We decided, then, on a weekly two-sided newspaper about $6\frac{1}{4} \times 8\frac{1}{4}$ inches. It had in the top left-hand corner the Lion of Judah carrying the cross, and from there to the right-hand corner the three strips in colour of the Ethiopian Flag. In the middle yellow, so that nobody who could read should make any mistake about it, was written *Banderachin—Our Flag*. There followed short news items based on a simple war ideology—the success of the British and the Ethiopians in East Africa, the bravery of ourselves and the skunkishness of the enemy, low taunts at the failure of the Italians to carry out the promises of their propaganda and invade the Sudan and the failure of Graziani to save East Africa by taking Suez, American aid (based always on the idea that American advisers and missionaries were forward in aiding Haile Sellassie before the war of 1935). We were often criticised for ungentlemanliness and crudeness in our treatment of the enemy, but our answer was that the

Ethiopian would not be able to define the colours in his old school tie.

We had a great fight to call the paper *Banderachin*. The purists fulminated.

Banderachin is one of those words of mixed etymology that send a shiver down the spine of every don. One has only to say "squirearchy" in an Oxford hall to observe the squirm serpentine its way down the high table. Our paper's name was derived from *Bandera*, the Italian word for *flag*, and *achin*, the Amharic termination meaning *ours*. Hence the explosion of Professor Tamrat Emmanuel, whom the Emperor had proposed for editor.

I liked the Professor, but he was the most excitable Ethiopian whom I have ever met. The liberal education of the old German universities that he had frequented, the free thought of the Paris of his youth, years of applying the methods of the West to the young in Addis Ababa had not blunted the nerves of the Jewish mountaineer from Gondar. For the Professor was a Falasha, one of the purest of the Amharic tribes, who still practise Judaism because a former Ethiopian Empress who ruled from Gondar reverted to the ancient faith. The Falasha have just got set in their ways and refuse to call themselves Christians.

Tamrat was thin and springy, with an extremely well-shaped grey head and pointed beard; an elegant, an Ethiopian literary man. If you could ever have kept him still you would have seen in him the chocolate spit and image of Wickham Steed. But he had not the impressive poise of that journalist. It was as if one had administered strychnine to Wickham Steed, and he were exhibiting the first symptoms of reaction. The Professor would rush into one's office, already overcrowded by deserters sitting on the floor and drinking coffee, throw out one arm in a gesture of exasperation; twist his spare frame in fury; twirl his long fingers and pop out his intelligent eyes to show that the thing was desperate; then with his hard grey shock of curls starting from his brow like a petrified Medusa and with his head sideways on to me, he would denounce in the phrases of Bradlaugh yet another petty injustice to an Ethiopian in the

Sudan. The Professor was never satisfied. Justice must be completely just; honesty completely honest; and language completely linguistic.

That was the origin of our falling out. The Professor said that Banderachin was an abominable word, smelling of the vile Italians. He then whipped out from his storehouse of verbiage an Amharic word for flag which I suppose five hundred people in Ethiopia would have understood, because all the other educated ones had been bumped off by Graziani. In vain one explained to the Professor that Banderahad entered the Amharic language in the 'nineties, when the Ethiopians drew the idea of a flag from contact with the Italians. One added that the name was on the lips of every deserter. Tamrat showed now the quality of every Ethiopian except the highest. Facts would go to the winds; he knew best. He turned grey with literary rage whenever a new number of *Banderachin* came off the press.

After a number or two, also, it became slowly evident to me that (though either Perry or myself wrote the original English text of *Banderachin* and kept it simple) the paper flowered into learned incomprehensibility under the furious pen of Tamrat. We were writing on the assumption, gained also by experience, that about five per cent. of our readers in the Italian colonial army or among the patriots were literate; the rest were readers in the passive sense alone—they had it read or whispered to them. Now this is an ideal field for printed propaganda, for two reasons: the printed word inspires more confidence the less one is used to it; the literate in a semi-literate society is a sounding-board, for he wishes to exhibit his literacy. Against a certain amount of criticism of our methods by Sudan frontier officials on the score of long-windedness, we felt that the literates on the other side would not mind, would rather prefer us to spin out the story every week. But we insisted that the words themselves should be simple. Tamrat was not.

This was the moment which we had been waiting for. Tamrat got the sack.

He was replaced by Lij Sirak Herrouy. I have said that the Ethiopian race provides the widest range of types in



ገንደራችን

፩ኛ፡ ዓመት፡ ::

፳ኛ ቀን፡ ::

ለነፍስ፡ ሃይማኖት፡ ሳገር፡ አንድነት፡ ::

ዋ. ቻይል፡ ሥላሴ፡ ን. ነ. ዘኢትዮጵያ፡ ::

ክርትም፡ ጅ፡ የካቲት፡ ፲፱፻፴፫፡ ::

የኢትዮጵያ ሕዝብ ሆይ !

እንግሊዞች የሊብያን ሁለተኛውን ታላቅ ከተማ ቢንጋዚን በጥር ጽፎ ቀን ያዙ፡፡ ከተማረኩትም አስራ አምስት ሺ ወታደሮች ውስጥ የግራዚያኒ ምክትል የነበረው ጀኔራል ቢሮንዝላኖ ሌሎችም ሰባት ታላላቅ ጀኔራሎች አሉባቸው፡፡ ስለዚህ የሊብያ ግማሽ የሆነው ቼረፍኒካ የተባለው አውራጃ በሙሉ እንግሊዝ ች እጅ ገብተዋል፡፡

የሀይለስጋው የእንግሊዝ የተንክ ጦር ግራዚያኒ ከተረፈለት ጥቂት ወታደሮች ጋራ ወደ ተሽሽገዘት ወደ ትሪፐሊ ይጓዛል፡፡ ነገር ግን ግራዚያኒን የሚያደነግር የነበረ የለም፡፡ ወይም ወደ ኢጣሊያ በአያሮፕላን በርዳ መሆኑን ለሙሉ ሳይሰማ ታወቅ፡፡ ወይም ራሱን ማግኘት፡፡ ወይም እጁን ለእንግሊዞች መስጠት አለበት፡፡

ስለዚህ ኢጣሊያ በኢትዮጵያ ላይ ሳይረገግ ይሄው የጭካኔ ሥራ ምልክት የሆነው ስሙ የተረገመው ግራዚያኒ እንደዚህ በመቀረጁ ብድራትን ተመለሰልን፡፡ የራስ ደስታ ደም፡፡ የራስ ካሣ ልጆች ደም፡፡ በየካቲት ፲፮ ቀን ፲፱፻፳፱ ዓመተ ምሕረት አደስ አበባ ላይ የፈሰሰው የቤት የሕጻን የሽማግል ወቅትም ደም፡፡ የተቃወሙት አብያተ ክርስቲያን፡፡ በመትረፍ የተፈጸሙ ካህናት ደም የነዚህ ሀሉ ብድር ተመለሰ፡፡

እንግሊዞች ግራዚያኒን አልገደሉትም፡፡ ነገር ግን ከዚህ የባሰ ፍርድ ፈርደው በታል፡፡ በወታደራዊነትና በጦር መሪነት ያገኘውን ስም ለዘላለም አጥፍተውበታል፡፡

የኢትዮጵያ ሕዝብ ሆይ !

እስከ ዛሬ ድረስ በሊብያ ውስጥ አንድ መቶ ሠላሣ ሺ የጣሊያን ወታደር ተመርኮአል፡፡ ከነዚህም ውስጥ ካሉት የጀኔራሎች ናቸው፡፡ ደግሞም ሶስት መቶ ሃምሳ ታንክና ከአንድ ሺ ሁለት መቶ በላይ መድፍ ተመርኮአል፡፡ መትረ የሰነፍ ሠመንጀው ገን ቁጥር የለውም፡፡

የኢትዮጵያ ወታደሮች ሆይ !

እናንተ ጀግኖች በገብዘፍ ሥራ ልባችሁ ደስ የሚለው፡፡ እናንተ ንጉሠ ነገሥታት ሁንና ባንደራችሁን የምትፈቅሩ አርባኞች ስሙን፡፡ እንግሊዞች ሄህን ታላቅ ድል እንደምን እንደገና እንገራችሁ፡፡

እንግሊዞች በተጥሳሣ ፮ ቀን ሲገዙ በራሲን ያዙ፡፡ በተጥሳሣ ፳፮ ቀን ባርዲያን ያዙ፡፡ በጥር ፲፮ ቀን ተብረክን ያዙ፡፡ በጥር ፲፱ ቀን ደርፍን ያዙ፡፡ በጥር ፳፱ ቀን ቢንጋዚን ያዙ፡፡ ስለዚህ እንግሊዞች ምሥር አገር ካለው መርሳ ማትረፊያ ከተላለው ዋና ሰፈራቸው ገነብተው በመንገዳቸው የነበረውን የጣሊያ

ጦር ሁሉ ሰባብረው ከሁለት ወር ባነሰ ጊዜያት ጽዋጃጃ ቢሉሜትር ተጊዙ ። ከዚህም ቀደም በወጣው ባንደሬችን ውስጥ ሲደ በሬኒፍ ባርዶያ ተበረ ከም እንደሚገኝ እንደተያዙ ጽፈንላቸው ነበር ። ነዚ ቢነጋዚ እንደሚገኝ እንደተያዙ እንደገና እንደገኙ ጽፈንላቸውን ።

ገና ባርዶያ ሳይወድቅ ከዚያው የነበረው የገሬዚያኒ ምክትል የነበረው ጀኔራል ቢርትንዘላ በፈጠነ የሞትር ጀልባ ሽሽተ ወደ ቢንጋዚ ሂደ ነበር ።

ቢንጋዚም ከደረሰ በኋላ ዘላብያው ስጦታ ያለው፤ ታንክና እንግሊዞችም ከበታተኑት ጦር የተረፈውን ሰብስቦ ከተሣሣሩ ሰንደ እንደተሆነ የሚታለውን አደረገ ነገር ገን እንግሊዞች ያሚበዛውን ማርከው መንገድና የሠገሬቤት እንደሠራ ወደ ምሥር ልከዋቸው ነበርና እስራኤላውስት ቪ ወታደር ብቻ ለመሰብሰብ ታለ።

ቢርትንዘላ አረቦች ጀበል አክደር የሚሉትን በቢንጋዚና በደረፍ መካከል ያለውን ተሬሬ ከሌላ አድርጎ ለመቀጋት አሰበ ። በቢንጋዚና በደረፍ መካከል ያለው አገር ተሬሬማ እንደሆነ በደረፍና መካከል ያለውም አገር እሸዋማ በረሃ ነው ። ቢርትንዘላም በረሃው ከእንግሊዞች ታንክ ያደነፍል ብሎ ነበር፤ ይህ ሳይሆን ቀረ ። አሁን ደግሞ ተሬሬው ያደነፍል ብሎ ነበር ሄህም ሳይሆን ቀረ ።

የቢርትንዘላን ሀሳብ ታላቁ የእንግሊዞች የጦር አዛዥ ጀኔራል ዌበል አውቀውት ነበርና ደርፍን ከያዙ በኋላ ታንካቸውን በደረፍና በቢንጋዚ መካከል ባለው ተሬሬ ታችታቸን ሰደው ቢርትንዘላን በስተደቡብ በኩል ወጉት ። የእንግሊዝ እግረኛ ወታደርም በተሬሬው ላይ በተሠራው መንገድ ሲገዝ ነበር ፤ ጣሊያኖችም ቢንጋዚን ለመልቀቅ ይዘጋጁ ነበር። የእንግሊዞች ታንክ ግን ደርሶ በስተደቡብ ያለውን የመሸገባቸውን መንገድ ቀረጠባቸው ። ጣሊያኖች ያህን በተረደሩት ጊዜ ያላቸውን ታንክ ሁሉ ሰብስበው ተጋፍተው ለመውጣት ሞከሩ ። አምስት ሰዓትም ከተዋጉ በኋላ በታንካቸው ያለውን ወታደር ከማስፈጀት ዘተቀር ምንም ለማድረግ አልቻሉም ። ስልሣ አንድ ታንክ ተሰባበረባቸው ሠላሣ አንድ ተማረክ ። እኩል ሰዓት ብቻ የሚቀጥል ኖሮት ስለተረፈቸው እጃቸውን ሰቡ ።

ቢርትንዘላ ራሱ ለእንግሊዙ አዝማች እንደህ ብሎ ተናገረ “ወታደርታችሁ የበለጠ ጎብዘና ስላላቸው ፤ ታንካችሁ የተሻለ ስለሆነ ፤ የበለጠ እንጉልና የባሰጠ ብልሃት ስላላችሁ አሸነፋችሁን ።”

ቀጥሎም እንግሊዞች ቢኒፍ የተባለውን የአደርጥላን ማረፊያ ሲደዙ በአደርጥላቸው መታረቢያና የምብ የተበላሸ ሰማንሃ ሶስት የጣሊያን ሁለት የጀርመን አደርጥላኖች አገኙ ። በአየር ላይ ከተሰበረት ብዙ አደርጥላኖች በተቀረ እስካሁን ድረስ በማረፊያ ቦታቸው ላይ የተሰበረት የጣሊያን አደርጥላኖች ቁጥር ከሁለት መቶ በላይ ሆኗል ።

የኢትዮጵያ ሕዝብ ሆይ!

እንግሊዞች ደህን ታላቅ ድል ለማክበር ሌላ ለዉምረብት ነው ። በእስመ ራ በስተምዕራብ በኩል አቅርዶት ላይ ጦራቸውን ይሰበሰባሉ፤ ከተርት ሱዳንም የተነሳው ጦራቸው ቃርሬን ፤ መርሣ ተክላደን ፤ ኢልኒፍን ይዘአል ። ወደ አስመራ ይገዛል ፤ በቅርቡም ኖቅፈንና ኩብኩብን ያይዛል ።

ከረገም ሰወድቅ ጣሊያኖች እስመራንና ምጽዋን የሚያድን ጦር የጣሉ ።

የኢትዮጵያ ሕዝብ ሆይ!

በየለህበት ተነሣ ፤ ባንደፍ እስካሪም ወደ ግርማዊ ንጉሠ ነገሥት ቀደማ ዊንደላ ሥልሴ ወደ ጉጃም ሃድ ፤ ወደም ወደየቤትህ ተመልሰህ ርስትህን ጠብቅ ፤ ወደም ከእንግሊዝ ወታደሮች ጋራ ተቀላቀል ። የሚቀርብህ ፡ ያዝ ፤ ነገር ግን ጣሊያኖች በየምብ ሊደበደቡ ነውና ፤ ልክሱን ጥሰህ በኩሉ ውጣ ። (BAND No 20)

A number of *Banderachin* or *Our Flag*.

Africa, and Sirak is part of my evidence. He was dreamy and determined and silent; though tiny, he had nearly got his cricket blue at B.N.C. and could still store away considerable quantities of beer; he suffered from an inner melancholy, and was clearly calm about it. He was an old friend of mine, and though he did not like me or any of his friends very much he understood us and knew what we wanted. He had learned from his father, Blattengeta Herrouy, the Emperor's former Foreign Minister, to write a lucid and concise Amharic that laid on paper looked like a well-planned garden, with level lawns, clipped hedges, vistas between the trees, and the colour of flowers not excessively splashed in. Without beating a lecture stand about honesty like Tamrat, he was scrupulous in his attempts not simply to translate but to transmogrify our ideas into their Amharic equivalent. Without having the slightest interest in publicity, he was a born propaganda writer; his pamphlets and newspaper were as clear as a bugle call. If he thought any of our ideas were stupid, he at once said so. He worked at a noiseless speed. Another person lived in him, completely dissociated from his work; it was thinking all the time about his wife whom he had left in Ethiopia in 1936, and at times it lay on its unmade brass bed in a sordid little Khartoum hotel sweating and smoking cigarettes and saying that its demon was upon it, that perhaps it would overcome the demon in this wrestling match, but that if it did not, the melancholy would master it for ever. This was always an anxious moment in our Abyssinian propaganda, but it was preferable to the continual strain laid upon the system by Professor Tamrat.

The other kingpin in our system was the chief compositor, Mr. Kostantinos Trage (pronounced Trudge), a dignified person who gradually assembled other smaller compositors around him and sat in the middle of them, like a pearl in an oyster, or the sun among more active planets.

Trage, who was half Eritrean and half Greek, had been a bank agent on good pay, and never tired of telling everybody in the remarkable range of languages at his command, English, French, Italian, Arabic, Amharic and Tigrinya,

that the work of a compositor was very small stuff compared with what he had done in the past. He was given to long speeches which did not cease even if one closed one's eyes and simulated sleep, and his preludes to the main topic of his visit reminded me of some of the bad plays that I had seen in London when I was a junior dramatic critic and was given the worst. Trage was bourgeoisie and correct, dependable and philoprogenitive. His five little boys were dressed with such a similarity and had entered the world in such quick succession that it was impossible to put them in chronological order. They followed him as he walked in impeccable attire around Khartoum and gently waved his cane, for all the world like a little pack of beagles. One could rely on Trage until one was blue in the face, because he was always in one of three places. Either he was in the office talking to one while one tried to work; or he was with Mrs. Trage, who had asthma and was expecting another; or he was walking in the shade of the trees with all the rest between the first point and the second. The sight of alcohol gave him a slight shock. He was a poor listener, being rather deaf, a condition that may have been precipitated by the constant beating of his own voice upon the eardrums. These characteristics were sometimes hard to support in the summer climate of Khartoum, but we could not have done without Trage. For all his high-falutin ideas he was an admirable, steady workman, and we would never have printed a page without him.

Somehow or other (for it had also to run the gauntlet of British and Ethiopian censorship) *Banderachin* came out once a week on Wednesday, and was delivered to the reader by hand and airmail. It was dropped by our aircraft in the Kassala-Tessenei-Sabderat triangle regularly, now that an Army Co-operation Flight was working there. It also went to Metemma, Gubba and Asosa when we raided those frontier posts, and was flown farther afield to Bahrdar Giorghis, Dangila and Burye when Dan had secured his air assistance. The District Commissioner at Gedaref sent it on donkeys to Armacheho and Kwara, and Geoffrey Hancock saw that it was dropped in the streets and houses of Beni

Shangul. It led to an increase in desertion, particularly from the Eritrean front where the enemy were now massing their forces. The enemy had to give up the death penalty because too many people were reading *Banderachin*; his new measures were the wiring in of his men and anti-deserter patrols; where the incidence of desertion alarmed him, he removed the askaris' arms at night. Even so there were a steadily growing number who bombed their way out and crossed the unknown desert of gravel and bush and no water until they came to one of our small standing patrols, hidden in the thorn. Desertion for them was many times more frightening work than it would be in any European campaign.

We were, of course, a constant source of mirth to the British world around us.

The R.A.F. referred to the pamphlets as wastepaper or worse, and their very natural prejudice against repeating the nonsense that they were obliged to practise over Germany in the first days of the war could only be broken down by telling them something about Abyssinian feeling, of which they knew nothing, and by bringing to them proof of the concrete crop raised by the paper manure that we asked their planes to scatter. Personal friendly relations did a lot to even things out; these fortunately had to begin from their side, for they were young men proud of their virility, had heard stories of the treatment allegedly meted out by Ethiopians to strangers, and were eager that we should print a talisman for them to use on forced landings. Of course nothing happened to them except the usual abundant hospitality of the Ethiopian countryman, but it was useful to carry the Emperor's seal and the Ethiopian colours on their persons and thus avoid the risks inherent in a country where most pilots were considered Italian. There were recalcitrant spirits to the last, who felt in the bottom of their quick-shooting hearts that to throw paper, whatever the effect, was in itself effete; rather like going to a tough party with a lily in one's hand. An Air Liaison Officer, who ought to have known that he was giving just the right proportion of moral sting to a bomb load, said that he would rather hitch

on a final 2-kilo incendiary than drop the equivalent weight in paper. But on the whole, after visits to the Emperor and evenings over scarcely alcoholic "sticky-greens" in the Bar, the young pilots were won. The senior officers had long since recognised that paper is heavier than it seems, but what senior officer in the R.A.F. can tell whether the young are filling their machines with waste or whisky?

It was our office that provoked most laughter, however; for hullabaloo and a good deal of boloney it compared well with the representations of newspaper life on the American screen. It was one long room with one small fan, a tropical climate and a lot of people trampling one on top of the other's stream of thought.

In the far end was Perry, working out the equipment of the Field Propaganda Units that we were planning for Gallabat and Gojjam and finding how to get them out of Q in spite of the fact that we had no authorised establishment whatever. The newspaper and the pamphlets were going well, and our job now was to see that the troops on the other side heard our news at the crucial moment in battle from organisations on the ground. The aircraft, however well used, is an unsubtle instrument when the stuff that it drops is printed in a central press. Often days late where feeling may have changed in a barrage, in a flickering page of time, it can never exploit the quick adjustments of a system of field intelligence. Perry was making these bricks without straw, like the good engineer that he was.

In occupation of the fan sat I, stripped to the waist, trying to get sense out of a tired deserter through an interpreter who has his own ideas about things, like all Ethiopians, and therefore will not translate what I tell him. The interrogation is put straight on to a typewriter crackling with dust from the haboob because there is no establishment to clean it, and when I look up the deserter has disappeared. He has had enough of it, so he is sitting under my table.

At my left hand the Mamur is fuming black smoke at an Arabic news-sheet, and half-left across the room Sirak, who has finished his work in a trice, is examining a knife that I brought from Finland and walks to the door to look without

uttering a word at the three deserters outside who wait their turn. Undeterred by the false report that none of us are in, Trage has entered the office very dapper with his cane and children, for whom he has ordered lime juice from a Sudanese marasla.

Mollie Harvey has spent most of the morning rushing between the filing cabinet and my table because in the good old days of the Douglograph I had no funds, and therefore no secretary, and therefore did the filing myself, and we cannot therefore find what I filed. Lorenzo has come in with a high political problem, very hush, affecting Anglo-Ethiopian relations, which can only be discussed in the window recess. He shoots meanwhile a few final questions to the sitting deserter, the children of Trage are spotted at their illicit lime juice and driven out. In comes the A.I.L.O. to ask for the pamphlets for the raid tomorrow.

It must be difficult for a regular to understand. The deserters outside are very tired and ask for coffee.

I repeat, we had no establishment. Offensive propaganda in the Ethiopian campaign, when for the first time in this war the potentialities of the moral manipulation of a great Fifth Column were realised, was not considered important enough to be endowed with clerks and corporals. Fortunately we had funds, but they could not give the discipline assured by status. This will have to be reviewed in the new army that we are building.

Banderachin was to live to its twenty-eighth edition. As events brisked ahead in January and February 1941, we cut out the back page and replaced it with a war-like picture, so that even he who ran might digest. But the most successful number was Eighteen, which we wrote for the Emperor's entry into Ethiopia and which is still circulating in the country, for the people have a timeless attitude to news. Appendix H contains this number, which explained to the population why the Emperor had left Ethiopia and why he now returned. The apologia does not often succeed, and totalitarian experts in propaganda have frequently held that the denial is the most valuable form of advertisement for a story. My experience is different. It is a question of

timing. You must wait until you know that the enemy have thoroughly overdone a story—e.g. that the Emperor ran away like a coward and a thief with the national funds—and that the population are convinced that with so much repetition it must be propaganda. Then you come in with a clear denial and a reasoned explanation, on the crest of a wave that here swept straight into Addis.

Chapter X

JULIUS CÆSAR

I CAME back at the beginning of November 1940 from Roseires to find a completely changed situation in Khartoum. The preparation for a forward move with the Emperor into Gojjam, that had so long hung fire, was beginning to crackle like the arson that Rolle left behind. There had been a most distinguished caller on the little man, and conferences followed. Mr. Eden, Secretary of State for War, and Sir Archibald Wavell, Commander-in-Chief Middle East, had been in the Sudan.

The Ethiopians had claimed the arms which figured in the conference at Wadi Halfa on 28 June. A small committee had been formed to rake up all weapons heavier than a rifle available for the revolt, and had found twenty-five light machine-guns and a few anti-tank rifles. Somehow or other the rest had never arrived. The Secretary of State put his finger on a weakness in the Q system supposed to be supporting Dan in Gojjam when he demanded how many rifles had been issued and was told that the number was not known but would be worked out.

Haile Sellassie also claimed the assembly of his guard and a beginning of training for Ethiopian refugees. He had already asked for the Eritreans from Kenya, and had been told that they could not come; they were deserters according to the laws of war, and therefore could not fight against the Italians whom they had deserted but could work on roads in Kenya. When this argument was repeated to Mr. Eden he is said to have uttered a single word which is among the most expressive in the English language. It was now suggested that the Eritreans might not want to fight. So Andrew Chapman-Andrews and Lorenzo—himself an Eritrean—went down to the camp in Kenya where the Eritreans were shouldering spades and read them the Emperor's invitation. At that there were wild cries of delight, men strutted up and down on their toes shrieking,

the seal was kissed and Lorenzo's feet, knees and cheeks. The Eritreans explained that they did not like making roads.

On 5 November the Kaid launched the attack on Gallabat that was to open the arms route to Dan. Our hopes ran high throughout the day. There was almost a panic in the hostile camp: "Our troops have not resisted efficiently; Lieutenant-Colonel Castagnola is walking round the line," said their wireless in clear.

But next day we knew the extent of our reverse. The tanks had been broken and we could not penetrate Metemma, where the Machine-gun Battalion of the Savoia Division were at bay. That night our troops were bombed by a heavy Italian air concentration out of Gallabat. In the morning Duggie Fabin, our intelligence chief, was looking grey instead of his usual brown.

Julius Cæsar entered in the middle of our depression. He did not exactly say *V* for *Veni Vidi Vici*, but there was an aura of the sentiment about him.

Major (later Lieut.-Colonel, later Colonel) Orde Wingate, R.A., D.S.O., came down from Middle East as the first-fruits of the Eden policy. He was a cousin of the most famous of the Sirdars and Governors-General of the Sudan, and professed in the same breath the idealism and ruthlessness which he had practised in the field of Palestine. Here he had won his decoration for organising and leading special Jewish bands by night against Arab terrorists. He was quite oblivious to danger and alive to the unexpected in this kind of campaign, and had developed the parachutist's extreme faith in courage, bluff and surprise as the principal weapon of modern war. He was a bully, but not the stupid, full-necked kind. Lank and sallow, with a stoop of the hyena in his shoulders, he had a nose of Wellingtonian bone and eyes that however narrowly set above it proclaimed his drive and his brilliance. He was something of a showman, and he loved the odd and (in the ritual biblical sense, for he had a completely pure mind by modern standards) the unclean. Over the dinner table he described with icy gusto the tech-

nique of hyena-hunting by moonlight, with pistols, in the country round Kassala. He would then describe the social habits of the hyena, and paint a scene of their dangerous eyes glowing when they were wounded and dragged their legs behind them, and of the aid offered by other hyenas. Somehow the conversation then switched to camel-dung, and how it breeds flies; hence, to the behaviour of flies when you put them under tumblers and later reverse the tumbler. When after an aggressive day in the office this student of Beelzebub retired to bed he regularly massaged his backbone with a rubber hairbrush. The alarm clock that roused him in the morning he carried in his hand all day.

He liked to enrage professional soldiers by stories, always phrased with the cold, analytical method of a social observer, about their stupidity and their low, acquisitive cunning in small things. "The military ape" was one of his pet types. But Wingate had served in the Sudan Defence Force and its officers knew him. They were long past rising to his bait. They were prepared to fight him only on mundane topics such as clerks and office accommodation. One of the most maddening things that Wingate found was that his fellow Englishmen absorbed criticism like a sponge.

But they respected him. He had brains, imagination and tenacity far above the average found in the great armies of the world. No theory was sacred to him; but he also replaced it with one of his own and, however insane it might seem, one felt in the bottom of one's illogical heart that he had the chilly ferocity and the faith to put it through. Faith meant much to Wingate. He not only had a very evident faith in himself; but he also equated himself with a religious mysticism to the cause which he was pushing—justice for the Jews in Palestine, justice for the Ethiopians and for the Emperor here; and he believed thirdly in a higher providence, like an Ironside. His sweeping attachment to a cause was often embarrassing to a university-trained specimen like myself. The very day that he arrived in Khartoum to take over the Staff work of the Ethiopian revolt he marched into Andrew's office and made him show how precisely and how many times he should bow when he entered the presence of

Haile Sellassie. When he entered the presence, he gave the little man something of a shock by telling him grimly in Arabic that he was 100 per cent. for him and for "the Habashi." He then insisted that in all future references to Abyssinian activity against the Italians our allies should be described as *patriots*, a word which for Wingate meant the same as *zealots* in the final siege of Jerusalem by Titus. My objection to the word was that it gave us hopes that were bound to be disappointed. The Ethiopians who had been out against the Italians for the last five years were indeed patriots of the highest kind, whose sufferings will never be recorded. But the word *patriot* conjures up for us the picture of somebody going to the execution block with his head high because he had blown up a power-station single-handed, or running to his death against machine-guns. The Abyssinian who was called a patriot was far more subtle and tentative than that. He seldom took risks, he slid out of gunfire; his chief service to his country's independence and to the British cause was his invisible ubiquity, the complete uncertainty about what he was going to do next because he did not know himself, and the hypnotic consequences that this had upon the Italian army. There was very little dash in the patriot movement until the Italians were on the go. The ordinary Englishman, with no knowledge of the enemy's order of battle and of the numbers of troops tied to the Ethiopian interior, could be forgiven if his hopes of high self-sacrificial endeavour stirred by the talk of patriotism were abashed by contact with the Gojjam, and could almost be forgiven for the revulsion of feeling that followed.

Yet for all his rudeness and his ferocious attention to a cause, Wingate looked quite human when he smiled. The wolfish look went out of the eyes.

His first decision was that he must visit Dan. The most sensational way to get this done would have been by parachute, but the idea was discarded on grounds of impracticability in unmapped territory; he therefore flew in by Vincent on 20 November. Dan, for whom this was the first contact with a new white face since mid-August, greeted him on a white mule on a home-made aerodrome that was nearly not

long enough. They conferred together and with Dedjasmach Mangasha during two days.

In his tour with the Sudan Defence Force Wingate had tramped with his men up and down the Dinder Game Reserve, which stretches along the Abyssinian border between Gallabat and Roseires, cut from east to west by the rivers Rahad and Dinder and molested in its dry brown-leaved fastnesses by the elephant poachers of western Gojjam. When he entered the Ethiopian sky on 20 November he flew across the southern end of this shapeless country, whose uninhabited hideousness strongly attracted him. He flew on north of the massif of Belaya and from his plane the country appeared to be much the same—hard flat country covered with sere forest, where few natives would care to live and spy. The only line of communication that ran across it was the disused patrol road between Gubba and Metemma, north and south. The maps marked another but non-existent trace curving from north-west on the Sudan frontier to south-east on the Ethiopian escarpment, also by-passing Belaya on the north.

Wingate had a geometric mind which sprang instantly to its conclusion, as a line which is straight follows the shortest route between A and B.

Here was a huge gap in the Italian system which he would penetrate. One should rejoice that there were no tracks, because it was on tracks only that we would be smashed by the Italians. No matter that there was no food or water; that could be carried, with munitions for a great campaign, on thousands of camels. No matter that there were no guides. Guides always led one straight into the enemy, because no guide ever knew the way. The British officer leading a column would march by compass on Belaya, whose lofty mass would beckon him during the last days of his trek as the pillar of cloud led the Israelites through the desert. Belaya (which Ronnie Critchley had now reconnoitred from top to bottom and proved, though foodless, to be an impregnable natural fortress) would be the first base that Wingate would seize in Ethiopia.

He decided on these ideas in the aircraft before he saw

Dan, and did not abandon them. All that he wanted from Dan was mules to do the final haul from Belaya up the Ethiopian escarpment, which even Wingate with his whip did not believe that camels could accomplish. Dan knew that mules were difficult to collect and saddlery even harder, because the Italians had bought up the market for their army transport, and the *nagadis*, the traders who had driven mule caravans to the Sudan in the good old days, had gone out of business during five lawless years. But he would do his best; as also, to collect a local bodyguard for the Emperor.

Wingate returned on the 22nd, and was soon in Cairo. I do not know what were the methods beyond his usual that he employed in Cairo, but when we next saw him he was standing in sombre triumph with a broom in his hand on a large map of Ethiopia. Those who had anything to do with the Ethiopian venture gathered round him in a ring, as if he were a football coach.

The bag had opened, and out had poured rifles, ammunition, light machine-guns, heavy machine-guns, hundreds of officers and N.C.O.s and about one million pounds Egyptian. The 2nd Ethiopian Battalion had already arrived from Kenya and camped outside Khartoum, where all Ethiopians would now be trained by British cadres. There would be lightning interpreter courses, and gardeners in a jiffy would learn how to plug seeds into Belaya. British officers and N.C.O.s would be put at the head of units known as Operational and Intelligence Centres, 150 Ethiopians strong, and would march here, and here, and here, across the map of Gojjam, to blow roads and give a spearhead to the forces of the different chiefs. Centre No. 1 must eat its Christmas pudding on the Blue Nile. The Frontier Battalion would be marching to Belaya by companies; Acland's company would have an aerodrome cleared at Belaya by x days + 7. The Emperor would enter by a special security track blazed by M.T. The 2nd Ethiopians would get their new rifles and machine-guns within a month, and by practising field-firing as they marched would know well enough how to handle them by the time they had made contact with the enemy. Let Gubba and Kwara stew in their own juice. When all were

gathered on Belaya, they would take Dangila by compass and by storm!

Wingate then took the broom firmly and swept away the whole of Gojjam. A few feeble protests, and we toed the line. In a little over a month he had collected over 15,000 camels from all over the Sudan, with volunteer drivers, for the great thrust into Gojjam. In the past six months his predecessors gathered 800.

Hugh the mountaineer, who had flown over the same line as Wingate, came up to Khartoum to persuade him that this area west of Belaya was not flat country, but a continuous series of lava ridges concealed by bush, one powdered wrinkle after another rising to the final cliffs of the massif. But it was too late to deconvince Wingate. The dogs might bark, but the biggest caravan in the history of the Sudan and Abyssinia must go on.

Peter Acland's No. 4 Company of the Frontier Battalion was sent over the border with fourteen days' rations early in December. It hewed its way by hatchet through the bush and the bamboo to Belaya, which it reached at the end of that period. Prudently, it ate its own camels and lived besides on a half-pound of flour and grain on alternate days, without distinction of officers and men. At Belaya the Company found a miraculous country. The great walls of this solitary plateau started from the inhospitable plain, and rills of water fell and leaped down its sides, clustered with moss, ivy and bracken, like Devonshire coombs. Four thousand feet higher, on the top, was Taffere Zelleka's village and the home of fifty of his fighting men in meadows where large cows munched knee-deep, preparing milk in exuberance for the community. Dog-roses eyed the Englishmen from big bushes under flat-roofed acacias. There were rhododendrons that were going to bloom pink and white before they left, and orchards of the red bastard fig. Honey was brought from the villages in the plain beneath, which provided Taffere Zelleka with 500 more armed men. The Fitorari in his uniform from Khartoum, and his little boy, armed with a toy rifle, received our advanced guard. He impressed us with his sincerity. A few weeks before, indeed,

he had received Italian emissaries bearing gifts of corn (for which in their apparent wealth his people were starving) and clothing. This, they said, is a token of what you will get if you join us. I will give you a message to the Italian command, said Taffere Zelleka. He took the grain and clothing, put them in a storehouse, and set fire to the lot. Now go back, he said, and report what you have seen.

Italian aircraft had blown a hole into his old church, but he had built a temporary new one to shelter the ancient cross, made of Ethiopian gold, which Belaya had inherited over many centuries of battle for the faith against Islam and the pagan.

Peter Acland had orders to deliver arms to the patriots who would come down the escarpment to fetch them on a given date. But they did not come. And while he was waiting, an aeroplane of our own dropped propaganda on our troops (who needed food) and a short pencil message, telling him that he must stay. Belaya must be held against all comers. It was the forward bastion of our line.

The Company, now living on the country, established the defences of Belaya at the fourteen different points of entry into the massif. It lay like a great mounted horseshoe with the opening towards the escarpment, which was easily visible along the whole of its line from Zibist near Dangila to the Blue Nile divide. Looking west one saw the great uninhabited mass of the brother plateau, Dangwur, and as the season progressed in dryness the bamboo forests in Dangwur lit up in enormous lines, so that in daytime the whole mountain seemed on fire, and in the evening under the diamond stars it was as if a great city flamed, street upon street, block after block, burning millions of men. Taffere Zelleka hung up in his hut a fine collection of our propaganda pictures, with portraits of Haile Sellassie and Winston Churchill in the centre, and somewhere else Mussolini scored out with a cross from a pencil. That made visitors laugh a lot.

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Even without aid from the Sudan, the situation in Gojjam was thoroughly alarming the Italian command. Torelli

in Dangila and Natale in Burye had been unable to suppress the great chiefs Mangasha and Nagash in a series of expeditions. The Wellesleys were bombing the brigade forts in the moonlight and Dan's propaganda was well under way. Italian prestige was falling. Her solution was typical, for it was political.

General Nasi, the friend of the Duke of Aosta, and the most experienced colonial officer in Italian East Africa, who had during his period as Vice-Governor-General tried to soften the impact of the Fascist regime on the Ethiopian and knew how to address honeyed words to the outlaw, had been appointed to the turbulent Western Command which included Gondar and Gojjam. Under him the Italians' last card was played. Well paid in solid silver for his services and provided with a formidable armament, Ras Hailu returned with a fighting tail to his ancient province of Gojjam. His father Tekla Haimanot had been King (Negus) of Gojjam, and he himself had ruled in his father's stead until he revolted against Haile Sellassie and was brought to Addis Ababa for house confinement. There he had remained under the Italians also, though treated by them as the first Ethiopian in the land, loaded with decorations, and, with his great-nephew Dedjasmach Mamu alone, allowed to disregard the strict Fascist colour-bar and to enter European hotels and restaurants.

Mamu was already receiving a subsidy of about 300,000 lire a month to run the Bande at Burye, whose camps we were now firing from the air. He was also carrying on an ambiguous correspondence with Dan, in the tradition of his house. The dynasty of Tekla Haimanot was playing for its own hand as it always had in the past, with a coolness born of its own aristocracy.

Hailu was over sixty. But he still had the magnificent presence and the carriage of his youth, straight as a die and as his heart was crooked. The old gambler with the hair dyed black came across the Blue Nile with an agreement from Aosta in his pocket, whereby he was at a fitting place and time to be nominated King of Gojjam.

Here was a political puzzle indeed for Dan and the

Emperor's representative Azaj Kabada. Hailu, whom they both knew well, enjoyed great power in Gojjam even among the loyalists. For this reason, and because the Emperor himself had written to him asking him to come over, and because Hailu put up a screen round his tactical intentions, they did not like to attack Hailu openly. He used this hesitation to strengthen his own hold in Debra Markos and eastern Gojjam; to negotiate with the supposed patriot leader, Lij Belai Zelleka, a fighting man of humble birth, on the basis of a marriage for the snob into the great family; to alarm the Gojjamis by repeating that he, and he alone, stood between them and the use of the dreaded mustard gas by the Italians.

The Duke of Aosta now gave a personal stir to this political brew, in the concoction of which the Italians are as accomplished as in *minestrone*. He copied the Emperor's seal and the photograph of the Emperor with an aircraft that we had used, found somebody who could imitate the writing of our old Douglograph pamphlets, and printed a bogus decree under the Imperial titles that was scattered one night over eastern Gojjam. It declared simply that Dedjasmach Mangasha for his services would be made *Negus*. The brilliant idea was to give offence to the house of Tekla Haimanot, of which the other patriot leader Nagash was also a member, and so to undo Dan's work of unification. It was followed by other egregious fakes, and if it had been followed by military force it might have won the day. But the force was with us.

Chapter XI

AND HE MARCHED THEM DOWN AGAIN

I HAD hoped to participate in the battle of Gallabat with a Field Propaganda Unit, but Rolle's timing had got me on the wrong foot. The Kaid had already received a scheme from me on the function of such a unit. Apart from some details that must still remain secret, the proposals were these:

(a) in a full-dress attack, to send groups of four Ethiopians with every infantry unit to megaphone the enemy during intervals of fire and to carry the Ethiopian flag;

(b) in an armoured attack, to mount the Ethiopian flag on a certain number of armoured fighting vehicles;

(c) at night, to approach enemy positions at close range and assail them with the megaphone;

(d) before a full-dress attack, to cover the enemy's retreat with printed propaganda and to give indications to deserters of what direction they should take to reach our lines.

The Kaid smiled sharply at the flag sections, and wrote in a minute on them that he was going to war and not to a tattoo. Otherwise he approved, and gave me my head. The Kaid, though a regular first and foremost, hated to fight according to the book and liked every experiment—provided that it was disciplined. He had early recognised the value of propaganda as a co-operative arm.

Personnel—thirty men—were chosen for me in my absence, and according to the original plan I was also to run a force of a hundred patriots on the left wing of our line at Gallabat. But the patriots came from the quarrelsome district of Arma-cheho, and the Emperor had chosen a judgmatic old man to compose their disagreements. Tsahafi Tazaz Haile was far too scared to issue orders; all that he could do when I called on him in his brushwood house in Gedaref was to grip his throat between his hands, assume a harrowing expression, and say that this was what his countrymen would do to him

if he did not enter Armacheho with more than his allotted share of arms. He slept throughout the war (when slumber was vouchsafed to his apprehensive frame) with a machine-gun under his bed. Naturally the men whom he implored to join me never turned up.

Shallaka Kassa accompanied me, and in his opinion the remaining thirty were not much better. They were old refugees from Kassala and Gallabat. They had joined up in a peculiar frontier patrol at the beginning of the war when we were hard put to it to find anybody to patrol at all. During the early months they had hopped round Gallabat without blankets or shoes and fortunately without contact with the enemy except on one occasion; during the same period it rained continually upon them but did not extinguish their untrained enthusiasm nor wash away their utter incompetence. At last, when our front was reinforced from India, they were removed to Jack Maurice's camp in the Animal Transport Lines, Khartoum. They were selected for me on the grounds of their experience in the Gallabat area. The thirtieth of them got himself inserted at the last moment because he was a tailor and wished to salvage his sewing machine from Gallabat fort.

We drove down to Gedaref through the night in four lorries. At Gedaref the members of the Unit were allowed to see their families and returned to their transport late and drunk. For this I, determined to be original because this was my first experience in the field except as a war correspondent, gave them nothing to eat but one biscuit apiece during twenty-four hours. The effect was momentarily extremely good but impermanent; for a time they settled down quietly at their camp at Tuklein Wells, near Gallabat, to clean their rifles and to practise marching with advance and flank guards through the thick grass and glossy green tangle of thorn beside the Atbara. Neither they nor I had ever done this before. We were equally untrained. But Shallaka Kassa came to the rescue, and I established a moral ascendancy over them by killing a crocodile at 200 yards, a fluke if ever there was one, seeing that in absolute secrecy on the same day I missed another at fifty.

From the Wells we marched up to a charming miniature cataract close to the Ethiopian border, where one could bathe at evening and return to a camp under enormous trees that shed a shade of twilight all day long. And thence we went to a pool in the Boundary Khor, which means dry river bed, well in advance of our front line on the extreme left, and facing across a density of grass and umbrella tree ready for fire from the unknown positions of the enemy.

Theory does not often align itself with practice. I had imagined well-plotted enemy lines, exact knowledge of his machine-gun posts and of where every battalion lay. I found a front enormous for the size of the forces involved, where visibility was twenty yards and one could find the other simply by bumping into him. We had to patrol for five days before we could point to any Italian position.

One learned a lot, going through the thorn, putting out flankers on every shallow rocky crest, seeing that every link in the long Indian file knew where the others were, fore and aft. We went round the enemy's left, saw stale tracks, pressed him closer, until one morning we observed his scouts on the hill Dafeis, some six miles north of still smoking Metemma. This was his left.

Every day our artillery boomed across the wide sea of grass in the centre of which we were drowned. Its perseverance was the only sign to our raw Unit that we still had the upper hand, for we saw none of our own troops except a company of the Eastern Arab Corps, of the Sudan Defence Force, on the three little hills behind us.

Pat Cousens, its commander, was charged with an operation on Dafeis after our discovery. We participated in this rough-and-tumble. Orders were to climb Dafeis quietly, advance along the crest in line, push the Italians off, try for prisoners, withdraw. The Unit got there first, waited some time, grew impatient and pressed on. It was now that I realised in a buzz of rifle fire the inadequacy of the Ethiopian as a scout. Our advance guards led us straight on to an Italian camp fire without saying a word. The enemy, as alarmed as ourselves, opened the usual blind innocuous hail of musketry upon us. The Ethiopians behind me went wild

in the exchange of shots, and fired through us. There was the usual panic of untrained troops shouting that they are surrounded and beating back. Comic relief was provided by the tailor of Gallabat, who was last seen literally back-firing at the foe, for he ran off with his rifle pointing behind him over his right shoulder and ingeniously pulling the trigger with his left, the while he uttered ferocious war cries. He thus nearly killed me twice, who was following hard on his heels. In this rout, while our backs were universally turned in disgrace towards the foe, one of the Unit performed a veritable feat of legerdemain. He killed an enemy machine-gunner and captured his ammunition. All this looking the wrong way!

The enemy ran away too, and Pat Cousens occupied the hill Dafeis.

After that we operated only at night, when I would go out with Kassa and three or four of the less alarming members of the Unit, and Kassa would talk up the hill from the valley and the enemy would fire a lot of harmless stuff high over our heads.

The number of deserters gained in this way was o.

All except two or three of the Unit were now thoroughly scared by what they imagined was the exposed position of our camp. They said that they would be surrounded one night and exterminated. Who, then, would give the dead Christian burial? But if I were to bring to the Khor Pool one hundred more Ethiopians, then they would have a chance to bury each other in battle and to do honour to me. Brigadier Slim, commanding at Gallabat, said that this was the most original argument for reinforcements that he had heard.

Perry took over for three weeks and did the same sort of thing with an improved unit, from which the tailors and seamstresses had been excluded. The thing at its first assay was a failure, but it taught us valuable lessons.

(1) Propaganda is a weapon of co-operation or of exploitation. It is ineffective in a situation like that prevailing at Gallabat in November–December 1940, when major activity on either side had ceased and neither knew which was

winning. This was doubly clear, for our pamphlets failed at the same time at Gallabat; while farther north, at Kassala and Tessenei, the steady trickle of deserters went on.

(2) Field Propaganda demands highly-trained officers and men, the utmost alertness and self-discipline; to succeed, contact with the enemy must be close indeed. Neither I nor my men were trained.

(3) Perfect reconnaissance of the enemy must be completed before the Field Propaganda Unit goes into action. Our men, poor material from the first, had already been dulled by patrolling before they started.

(4) Propaganda units, though participating in action and defensively armed, must not fight the enemy except as a last resort. Otherwise they lose their heads and go as animal as any infantryman.

(5) National characteristics must be weighed in the allotment of functions to a Propaganda Unit. The Ethiopian is and always will be a know-all, which means that in battle he is a Johnny-head-in-air and a hopeless scout. He has nothing of the subtlety of approach of the Sudanese. When caught on the hop he shows astonishing extremes of cowardice and courage. It is therefore necessary to protect the Ethiopian against surprise, as the essential quality of a Propaganda Unit is neither courage nor cowardice but collectedness and the cool performance of a programme.

We therefore set ourselves to reconstruct the Unit out of the best available deserters, men who had been self-possessed enough to get out of Kassala and reach our own invisible lines. For the next venture we were going to operate not only against enemy positions but within the enemy system. We would have a non-combatant population to turn into a fifth column, such as we could not find in the bare unpeopled wastes round Gallabat. A search was therefore made for a small press that could be taken into the field, climb mountains and swim rivers and run away when discretion was the better part of journalism. McCorquodales, the printing company in Khartoum, whose Goodfellow and Hurcombe, Kontos and Sukkar had given us magnificent service in the production of pamphlets for any emergency, dug up a hand-press

of the type used by Orientals for the manufacture of the colossal visiting-cards that prove that they are a cut above other Orientals. This could turn out pamphlets about four inches square. A compositor and a proof reader were put into khaki and issued with rifles. Representations of the Imperial seal, nine feet high, were ordered in Cairo. They arrived gorgeous in black, scarlet and gold, and although one critical Ethiopian opined that the Lion's paw was not quite big enough and another that its tail was not sufficiently twirled, we thought that they would have the effect on the people of Gojjam that they did. Coloured inks were bottled for the little press and a gold confetti portraying the Lion of Judah in miniature was laid up in paper bags.

Chapter XII

DICHOTOMY

IN the first days of January the superb 4th Indian Division, still with a putative dust upon it from Nubeiwa, Tummar and Sidi Barrani, began to gather in the Sudan near Kassala. The Kaid planned a move into Eritrea at the beginning of February. Suddenly the Italian garrison in Kassala and Tessenei began to thin out. They were trying to get into the high country of Eritrea before we cut off their Divisions in the Kassala-Tessenei-Sabderat triangle, and the Kaid had to advance zero to 19 January, first light.

By the same date the whole of the Frontier Battalion, with Hugh, were established at or were near Belaya; Wingate had got the 2nd Ethiopians down to the border, where his thousands of camels rumbled in the obliterating bush. In a vast hurry, in a matter of two weeks, in a style so English that one did not know whether to admire or to shrug one's shoulders, Andrew had vamped up a caravan for the Emperor, Ras Kassa, the Grand Prior of Ethiopia, and the assembled Dedjasmatches.

Co-ordination was not our strong point because every section of the Ethiopian organisation was working short-handed. It was not surprising that I did not know until only three days before 20 January that the Emperor would enter Ethiopia on that day. We had, however, long discussed the theme for his entry. It would be forgiveness.

The Italians had spread the propaganda that the Emperor, if indeed he were alive, which was improbable, would execute all those who had served the invader on his return. They had done this, like all their preparatory propaganda, with extreme subtlety and in a manner attuned to the Ethiopian character. Somebody unquestionably holy had dreamed a dream that the Emperor would come back to Ethiopia after five years, but that the Italian massacres would be nothing compared with the horrors that would accompany a restoration.

It did not matter that at Kassala the Italians were still saying that the Emperor was dead. They resembled lawyers in their calm preparation of alternative defences.

There was no doubt that this talk of a vengeful Lion of Judah kept many high Ethiopians in the Italian camp. I had long since asked the Emperor to issue a general pardon. But he was far better at timing than I. He calculated that if he pardoned his enemies when he was still in the Sudan he would depress the patriot movement in Gojjam; but if he did so when he was actually seen by the Gojjam patriots, when his tent was pitched on Ethiopian soil, they would dismiss the gesture in the joy of having a leader at last and the physical assurance that the stories, the printed words, the photographs that had come from the Sudan were in the end true.

The moment had now come, and we published the Decree of St. Michael's Day. The first two thousand copies were hand-gilded on fine bluish paper, with envelopes of the same sealed with the Lion seal. These were to be presented by hand to chiefs all over Ethiopia. There were cheaper gold specimens for dropping on important targets like Adowa, and thousands in plain blue—a religious colour in Ethiopia—for the masses.

The Decree of St. Michael's Day, which was the day of the Emperor's return to his people, read thus under his titles:

MY PEOPLE OF ETHIOPIA, LISTEN!

Glory be to God, whose judgment is impartial, who breaks the arm of the strong, who comforts the weak!

Italy, our blood-enemy from former times, having crossed our frontier and waged an unjust war of aggression against us, We resisted as long as We were able and then went to Europe to seek aid. In the meantime you warriors of Ethiopia, without sheathing your swords and without rolling up your flag, armed only with your natural bravery, fought on against superior arms rather than submit to the invader. You struggled on in the wilderness and in the mountains waiting for Us. This resistance of five years has enabled you to see now the fruit of your labours and sacrifices.

የኢገረ የኢትዮጵያ ሕዝብ :

መንገሥቱን፣ ነጻነቱን፣ አገሩን፣ ያጣ ሕዝብ የሚደርስበትን መሪር ሕያወት ሁላችሁም የምታውቁት ነው ።

የተወለደች አገራችንን ኢትዮጵያን በበለጠ ንቃትና የጋላ ጉልበት በየበኩላትን የምንጠብቅበትና የምናገለግልበት ዘመን አሁን መከፈቱ ነው ።

ኾር እግዚአብሔር የምሕረት ፈቱን የመለሰልን ለሁላችንም ስለሆነ፣ በግድም በውድም ቢሆን ከዚህ ቀድሞ በኢጣልያናት ውስጥ ወይም በውጭ ሆነህ አገርህንና ንጉሥህን የበደለህ ሁሉ ባለፈው ጥፋትህ ምረሃለሁና ዘርህን ለማጥፋት፣ ርስትህን ለመቆማት፣ ስምህን ለመደምሰስ ደምህን ለማርከስ ቆርጦ በመጣው ጠላታችን ላይ ከደር እስከደር ክንድህን አንሳ። ከኢትዮጵያም ጦርነህ እስከወጣው ።

ኢጣልያ በዓየርም፣ በባሕርም፣ በምድርም በታላቁት እንገላዝን የጦር ኃይል ተይዞ ተጨንቃለች ። በአገራችንም ያሉት የኢጣልያ ወታደሮች ከምታመንግቹሁ ከኢትዮጵያ ጀገኖች አያልፉም ።

የታላቁት በሪፓቢክ መንገሥትና ሕዝብ በመሪር ፈጥኖችን ጊዜ ልብ በሚነካ እደራረገ በኾርነት ስለተቀበሉንና ስለስተናገደን ለማይጠፋ ውለታችው በእኔና በእናንተ ስም በዓለም ፊት ምሥጋናዬን እገልጻለሁ ።

ኢትዮጵያ በነጻነት ለዘለዓለም ትኑር ።

ታላቁት በሪፓቢክ ለዘለዓለም ትኑር ።

ጥር 18 ቀን 1941 ዓ.ም. ምስረታ ።

The Emperor's Decree of St. Michael's Day
(20 January, 1941, in the European calendar)

We have already informed you of Our arrival on your borders with the aid of the British Government, which has entered with Us into a covenant to drive out completely Our enemy from Our country.

Our joy is boundless when We tell you that We, who have been absent for four years and eight months, have now by the grace of God once more set foot upon Our country's soil and are proud to be amongst you, Our people, whom We have greatly longed to see.

People of Ethiopia!

You all know the bitter life of those who have lost their Government, their country and their independence.

A new era has begun, when all will be able to serve their beloved Ethiopia in their different spheres with greater zeal and surer strength.

Gracious God, who has turned His merciful face, does so on each one of us. Therefore We now forgive those of you who have worked against the interest of your Emperor and your country; whether you worked, from force or from your own free choice, under Italian control; or whether you worked from outside Italian control.

From one end of Ethiopia to the other raise your arms against the enemy who has come to destroy your race, to rob your property, to belittle your glory, to pollute your blood. Wipe him from the face of Ethiopia!

Italy is seized in the grip of the great English, by sea, air and land power. The Italians in Ethiopia will not escape from my trusted warriors.

In Our own name and in your name, We thank before the world the Government and the people of Great Britain for their touching and unforgettable charity and hospitality to Us during Our bitter trials.

Long live Ethiopia in her independence!

Long live Great Britain!

Given in the 12th Tir 1933 in the Year of Grace. ✠

At the same time the Emperor published an appeal to his countrymen for generosity to the defeated Italians. In 1936 Marshal Badoglio and Marshal Graziani had not done the same to their victorious troops.

I reason with you, to receive with love and to care for those


Italians who fall into the hands of Ethiopian warriors, whether they come armed or unarmed. Do not mete to them according to the wrongs which they have committed against our people. Show that you are soldiers of honour, with human hearts. Do not forget that because the soldiers of the Adowa campaign brought to their Emperor the Italian prisoners, that has been to the honour and good name of Ethiopia.

Especially do I ask you to guard and respect the lives of children, women and the aged.

I said good-bye to the Emperor on the night of 19 January. On the same day three brigades from the 4th and 5th Indian Divisions occupied Kassala, Tessenei and Sabderat without resistance. Next morning the Emperor crossed the frontier into Ethiopia at Umm Idla, some eighty miles north-east of Roseires, and our troops were pursuing the enemy into Eritrea up the two roads to Keru and Aicota, in enormous clouds of dust and through detonating minefields.

I had now these two main fronts to care for; and two subsidiary fronts, at Metemma and in Beni Shangul, where action on the wings of the Gojjami rebellion would drive the enemy back and give Wingate greater freedom of movement.

So I had already said good-bye to Perry for a long time, and to the Field Propaganda Unit Number 2, with printing press, megaphones and banner seals, that was to march under him into Gojjam. My role henceforward was to provide the R.A.F. with material for its long-range work in support of the patriots, but to concentrate upon the Eritrean and the two subsidiary fronts, for which I had now received the promise of mechanical loud-speakers. Our organisation was deliberately cut in two.



Chapter XIII

FRUSCI AND FRUITION

WE had now been dropping paper in the Kassala triangle, where the Italians had gradually amassed two divisions, since the end of July 1940. Sporadically until *Banderachin* was published and the Army Co-operation Flights were there; with a saturating regularity for the last two months and more.

I have made it a principle to scrutinise enemy propaganda closely, to note not so much its arguments but the effect that they aim at producing and the fears that they disclose. But I have always resisted the temptation to enter into a debate with the enemy. It is better to have him chasing one's own themes, and on this we found that the Italians were particularly keen. Probably because they are as a nation loquacious. I noted the same tendency in the Ethiopians, who also like to talk. They were always pressing me to answer back.

There are, particularly in field propaganda and pamphlet dropping, mechanical as well as psychological reasons against the policy of rejoinder. Not only do you give the lead to the enemy, but you are probably not understood. On each sector of a wide front you are normally dropping a regular news service based on themes already absorbed by the enemy rank and file. But except by chance capture of copies you can never be certain of the distribution of enemy propaganda. What has been collected off a prisoner or deserter from Metemma may never have been uttered in Kassala, where reference to it is incomprehensible. The most dangerous thing in propaganda is incomprehensibility. It is like starting a radio programme and then dropping it for a day or two. Nobody wants to listen again.

It is fatal, however, to be bound by any rule. The enemy sometimes offers opportunities for derision (the most powerful weapon in wartime propaganda) that must not be missed.

Luigi Frusci was the Italian General for the Northern Command which covered the whole of Eritrea and Kassala.

He was one of those tiresomely earnest and hardworking men who lack imagination and thereby annoy their colleagues; are intelligent enough to see that they are thought wooden; and therefore rush eyes down like a bull against the future in order to make a great impression, and find that the future is very hard and the only impression is made on their own heads. Frusci, after being a purely formal, steady and unsuccessful commander for weeks, would suddenly take it into his head that he ought to do something brilliant and original. Later in the campaign, when Keren had gone, he had a fantastic scheme for saving the situation already lost by his stonewalling; when Dessie fell to pieces in his hands and he was caught with the Duke of Aosta on Amba Alagi, he hatched another ingenious plan, to which nobody would listen, for sending saboteur units back to Eritrea. Frusci began his series of bungled strivings to be bright, in the second week of January, when he issued this pamphlet to his own troops in Kassala:

The English are saying that in a few days they will attack our frontier districts, on the borders of Eritrea and Amhara.

The English, most of whose generals and soldiers are mercenaries, make a laughable force.

But please God, we shall kill the majority of them and chase the remainder over all the roads of the Sudan, while they call their rout and shameful retreat "a strategic withdrawal."

Such is the artfulness of military phraseology!

Long live our Emperor! Long live Italy!

GENERAL FRUSCI.

Within a few days Luigi Frusci, who had not examined all the implications of his propaganda, was ordered to withdraw from Kassala and the entire frontier zone. He did not like to do so, but he had to. He had given us the talking point for the opening of our most successful propaganda campaign.

All his troops had seen Frusci's pamphlet. As they struggled back under the dust clouds on the tracks and autostrada, our ridicule of their commander in Amharic and Arabic dropped in thousands on them. The Amhara

and the Eritrean are alike very sensitive to the leadership principle. If a chief shows up badly, he finds it difficult to recover his following. We were to exploit this characteristic of theirs later in the same offensive, for which we now printed all our pamphlets in scarlet ink.

For nearly a month now, these troops, both Italian and Askari, had been drenched with news of the defeat of Graziani and the invasion of Libya by our armoured troops. If it had not been for our pamphlets they would not have heard anything of the magnitude of the great Marshal's disaster. They had no wirelesses and the Asmara newspapers told them nothing. We knew that they had digested our material, for as we drove into Kassala we found not only a Hampstead Heath of paper still fluttering round the town, but pamphlets that had been carried away to be read in the secrecy of troops' quarters. At headquarters indignant remarks had been pencilled in our margins, but the men had taken the news without comment. Both reactions were satisfactory. We expected them. The discomfiture of Graziani was a bull-point to us. Not only was his name known to every Askari, whether Eritrean or Ethiopian, who had served in Libya or Ethiopia for him or against him. He had been the main theme of their propaganda in East Africa since the beginning of the war. Graziani was the man who would break into Egypt, occupy the Suez Canal and destroy the British blockade. He would bring the Italian Navy into the Red Sea and the Italian Army to Khartoum. There was no limit to the number of daring things that Graziani was going to do; and it was only because he was still preparing to do them that the Italian command had moved no farther west than Kassala.

We therefore danced in ungentlemanly fashion round the broken pedestal of Rudolfo Graziani.

The two Italian divisions withdrew in a mood of great depression from Kassala. They were meant to stand on the line Keru-Aicota; but at Aicota they did not stay a minute, and at Keru they were brilliantly encircled by a rapidly improvised manœuvre of the 4th and 5th Indian Divisions in conjunction. The greater part of the Italian 41st Brigade



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ሥጦታ ፡ እግዚአብሔር ፡ ንጉሠ ፡ ነገሥት ፡ ዘኢትዮጵያ ።

የኢትዮጵያ ሐዘበ ሆይ ።

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(No. 55)

Pamphlet announcing the Emperor's presence in Gojjam.

surrendered, and a full flow of deserters began from the other battalions on the dirt-track between Keru and Agordat. They came in by the score carrying the pamphlets stamped with the Imperial seal of Haile Sellassie as their talisman and asking if they could be enrolled in his army, as we had already promised them in messages thrown from the air.

As they ran into Agordat and Barentu, a second and powerful line of defence, we came in with our second blow from the air. It was short and sharp, and removed the ambiguities that had grown up in the Askari's mind about Haile Sellassie, whose whereabouts we had not yet been allowed to disclose. Under the seal and titles it declared in scarlet:

People of Ethiopia! Listen!

I am in the Gojjam, and I have raised the Imperial war-flag there. Your slavery is over.

You, Ethiopian, must come to me, to re-establish order and the country's independence.

It was the first news to the Ethiopian people that the Emperor was on the national soil.

The 4th Indian Division, now two brigades strong, had chased the enemy up to Agordat. One brigade of the 5th had cut the road between Agordat and Barentu and was approaching Barentu from the north; the other was approaching Barentu from the west. The enemy had a great superiority of men and guns.

Colonel Lorenzini, a strenuous and magnetic character, called by the Italian war propaganda the Lion of the Sahara because he had helped to beat up the Senussi at Kufra, was sent down to re-establish the situation at Agordat. Here the mainspring of the defence were his own 2nd Eritrean Brigade, the best troops in East Africa, the 4th (Gold Medal) and 5th, 9th and 10th native battalions who had fought loyally for Italy for nearly fifty years of colonial expansion. Keru had as yet been our only armed contact of any serious nature with the enemy, and that with only one brigade out of eight upon our front. Yet the enemy were demoralised.

Lorenzini's instructions written in the most emphatic form by Frusci were to *re-establish the self-confidence and the confidence in their leaders of both national and colonial troops*. So the Black-shirts were rotting too.

Lorenzini was promised full air support. The South African Hurricanes spoiled it for him.

He had medium and light tanks. But our I tanks, which we had already publicised to a nervous native army as invulnerable, had just arrived. We dropped pictures of them. We did not say that there were less than ten. On 31 January they broke through the Italian lines at Agordat followed by the Royal Fusiliers and the Camerons, smashed up the enemy mechanisation and put the whole of Lorenzini's force into a panic flight. Propaganda is a weapon of moral co-operation. We knew from experience that the enemy was scared of our tanks, therefore our job was to exaggerate. Let no one tell me the nonsense that battle propaganda must be strictly true. Where does truth or untruth lie in saying boo to a goose? Our job, too, was to put the whole theme into a phrase. *You fight for the Italians with your flesh ; we fight them with our steel ; which cuts which ?*

The rout that pressed up the gorge from Agordat to the third, the stupendous line of Keren was far too tired to read. Having cut down our phrases to a minimum, we now threw on them pictures and colours only. The colours were a great strip of the green, yellow and red of the national flag above the pictures; the pictures were the first evidence of the crossing of the frontier by the Emperor. They were large, unmistakable things, twice the format of this book.

In the first fortnight of February the 4th Indian Division launched three separate attacks on the enemy's positions at Keren. They were great cliffs and the steep rocky sides of hills that the Indians could surmount but for all their gallantry could not hold against counter-attack with grenade and mortar and superior forces. For to hold the pass at Keren the Viceroy of Ethiopia had denuded Addis Ababa of troops and sent to Eritrea the pick of the Savoy Grenadier Division. The enemy could also bring to bear a mass of guns on every movement of ours, for he had all the advan-

tages of observation from his impregnable line of crests in front of Keren.

Our reconnaissance units did their utmost, but could not find a way round the Italian mountain line. This was the lip of the same escarpment that ran across Gojjam east of Mt. Belaya, and that crosses the Gondar-Metemma road at Chilga. But here it was even more unbroken and precipitous.

We were checked. Our losses had been severe. Yet even at this moment, in the fortnight of our failure, 1,500 Ethiopian deserters with pamphlets in their hands came off the Keren positions alone. Among them were a whole company of foot with their N.C.O.s and their automatics, and half a squadron of cavalry.

The enemy had also run from Barentu. On this, his 2nd Division, were dropped pamphlets urging his men to go home to their districts now that their leaders were defeated. We told them that grave disorders had broken out throughout Ethiopia and that their place was with their wives and children and their property. In the fifty-mile retreat of this division from Barentu to Arresa about five hundred of its members deserted to us. The great bulk of the force, having lost its motor transport, drifted home in obedience to our orders. There were (so far as we knew) no disturbances in the home districts of any of them. But we knew that they could not deny our story except by going home first to verify it, for in the confusion of their retreat they had had no mail from home for weeks.

Our next theme was to launch a personal attack on Lorenzini. He was a skunk and a coward. He had run away from Agordat and left his troops in the lurch. He was no Lion of the Sahara; he must have had wings to get away as fast as he did. This of course was not true, for Lorenzini was a very brave man. But it was a policy selected for two reasons. First, because the Italian askaris remained no less sensitive to the leadership principle than they were in the case of Frusci. Secondly, because they were now in a thorough panic, and when a man is afraid he always wants to attribute his fear to somebody else. Our abuse of Loren-

zini, judged by the standards of the correspondence columns of *The Times*, was vulgar and distasteful. It annoyed extremely a brilliant British Divisional commander, who did not, however, know the qualities of Ethiopian and Eritrean troops, given since childhood to the harnessed practice of boasting and derision. Lorenzini was killed at Keren, but that unfortunate coincidence did not convince me, or the deserters that I questioned, that I had been unwise. If I had thought that such a story could have passed a British censorship I would have announced that he had been shot in the back by a deserting Eritrean askari.

The value of propaganda in an offensive of grand scale like that of Eritrea was now recognised by other high officers besides the Kaid, who had always supported it. The loudspeakers had arrived from Cairo and it seemed after experiment in Khartoum that they might be used on the 4th Division front against the enemy now stabilised on Mounts Sanchil and Dologorodoc. The Division agreed, and asked (for the first time in this war) for a plain paper raid by the R.A.F. I delivered the 80,000 pamphlets although I disapproved of the principle. Only on rare occasions, e.g. upon a totally defeated army streaming away, incapable of resistance, but capable of disorders that would tax the administrative services of the victorious powers, should paper be dropped without bombs. Propaganda is and always will be a weapon of moral co-operation. Just as artillery can do nothing without infantry, propaganda can do nothing without high explosive. Not that the parallel is complete. Artillery alone can at least destroy enemy material; but paper alone elevates enemy morale. This big paper raid was the least effective of the Keren campaign.

I left Khartoum at about 7 p.m. on 16 February and drove through the night to Kassala. The desert makes a level and sleepy run under the moon, marked in the last stretches near the Atbara by an avenue of empty petrol tins. At Kassala we breakfasted and picked a dozen men to talk on the loudspeakers. These deserters were in the prisoner-of-war cage and were by no means satisfied with the food. It had been suggested by an eminent officer that we should publish

pictures of deserters and prisoners eating a good square meal for once in a British camp—as if it were the desire for food and not a mixture of idealism and alarm that makes the troops desert. They looked so glumly at their plates and held them in so listless a manner that I was able to thank them. . . . But they were keen to go back and do something.

By 3.30 that afternoon we were at Major-General (now Lieut.-General Sir Noel) Beresford-Pierse's headquarters at the 121st kilometre stone on the road from Asmara, some ten miles west of the Keren positions. The general sat in dungaree overalls in a small flyproof chamber attached to the apolaustic motor-coach that he had looted from an Italian Army Corps commander at the battle of Sidi Berrani. He took in unbroken series cheroots from a sort of vanity-bag slung over his right shoulder, fitted them into a small opening in a ruddy face under a large Romanesque nose, and through the resultant smoke studied papers for hours on end. Near his quarters was a thorn tree with the most vivid flowers that I have seen in Africa. Whenever a deserter arrived from a new battalion defending Keren—and there were now over thirty battalions in position—his hizam or cummerbund, striped or checkered in a score of shades and none of them pastel, was flung upon the branches.

In the shade I was shown the layout of the enemy's battalion areas and some of his artillery, four days old because the deserters who brought the information took that time to come in nowadays. The Italians had wired up their front and had set armed peasants in the hills on the wings of the battle to watch and chase deserters, and there were cavalry patrols for the same purpose north of General Beresford-Pierse's camp. They had recently come so near that they seemed to be threatening his narrow communications along the Dongolas valley between Agordat and Keren, and for one brief moment, only to dismiss it, he had considered that he might have to withdraw his forces down the valley to the west.

Our position was not ideal. At Cameron Ridge, a narrow ledge under the very brow of Sanchil where the Savoy Grenadiers were now in force, we kept our purchase with two

battalions. That was all that we had in the "line" north of the road into the gorge that our army, motorised to the nines, must occupy if it were to feed itself in Keren. South of the road there was one unit facing the enemy across a dry valley that turned south, and as B.-P. said "making faces at them."

Behind this screen we had some admirable guns, for the 25-pounder is the best field-piece in the world and our 6-inches were more powerful than anything in the hands of the enemy. He, for his part, could have scooped the whole lot up by one raid from the north, curling from the mountains on our left beyond Cameron Ridge. In reserve we had one brigade resting, badly mauled but a cheerful lot; and along the single road of our communications the Cape Coloured Corps drivers and the spare M.T. of 4th and 5th Indian Divisions and every truck we could lay hands on were dumping three hundred tons a day for a last great bloody offensive working like a needle through the Kaid's mind. That man, and rightly, was not to be beaten by the perpendicular rocks of Eritrea. He was in a beastly temper, slept hardly at all, chivvied anything from a Brigadier to myself like a rat round his office. No matter; these were well-known signs of his determination. He was trying to think clearer and clearer, and detected in the braincases of others the fluffy ends of cotton wool worth singeing.

B.-P. was also thinking. Where the Kaid was thinking sharp and narrow, B.-P. was thinking calm and broad.

Why were the Italians not thinking too?

The ball was literally at their feet. We lay right below them, and we were very small and asking to be kicked. They had the best troops of Italian East Africa on the crests in front of us. When I went up to reconnoitre the site for the loudspeaker unit their long battlements unrolled before my eyes. From north to south; Samanna, Sanchil, Brig's Peak, the gorge a narrow shadowy cleft, Dologorodoc, Falestoh, Zeban, Zelale; a series of pointed peaks linked by sharp ridges held the horizon in impregnable order without a sag. Their guns fired wide of our truck as it came into view, three miles away. There, all was visible.

Why did they never counter-attack and break our communications from the north, although they had a month to do so? It took us a month to bring up the supplies, the ammunition and the men for the Kaid's great offensive. During that month the Italians never clambered off their peaks; only the deserters penetrated our lines.

The Italians failed at this last opportunity to save their Empire because their army was already demoralised and was incapable of offensive action. The men no longer wished to expose themselves to fire, even in the construction of defences and the laying of wire, and the officers had become slovenly. For three reasons.

First, the Royal Air Force had established a plain superiority over their lines and was, with artillery support, daily strafing them without opposition. Secondly, they were convinced that they were facing an enormous tank force. Thirdly, the troops were permeated with propaganda exploiting their previous reverses, and the attempts by the enemy to check desertion served only to reduce the men's confidence in their command. I had a long conference with B.-P., a stimulating talker, on the map; on the mental needs of Ethiopians and Eritreans and Italians and their distribution upon the skyline; and came home through day and night to attend to the patriot campaign and to prepare the final propaganda for Keren.

Work on the wings of the Patriots, on our two subsidiary propaganda fronts, had gone well.

In the north, the withdrawal of the armies of Eritrea had obliged the Italians to leave the Wolkait in a hurry. They abandoned about 150 lorries in this province, and evacuated the garrison of four battalions over hill and dale. Before leaving, they handed over their surplus stores and ammunition to the Ethiopian chiefs who had served them during the last five years, and said that they would be coming back some day. . . . The old friends newly equipped now turned their arms on the Italians, and shadowed them to the Takkaze picking off and pillaging the rearguard. Then they returned to scrap at home with those other chiefs, such as Adane and


Misfin Redda, who had always been loyal to the Emperor, and on that account had survived on a diet of locusts and wild honey.

Major Ringrose went up to the Wolkait to raise a guerrilla army, followed by Abba Qirqos, the same priest of the gentle fire who had buried Monnier in 1939, now an agent of propaganda. To aid the priest I faked the Emperor's signature to a tract which said that there must be peace between the factions and that armed men must leave the Wolkait to pursue the enemy in Gondar and in the Tigre. The priest persuaded the factions to compromise and to fight centrifugally. Part of them became the core of Ringrose's patriot army north of Gondar, which played a big part in the last stages of the campaign and forced the enemy to look north from Gondar, not southwards on Gojjam. The other part, with Misfin in the lead, went due east for the Takkazze fords south of Adowa on the main Asmara-Gondar road. They occupied two Italian forts and caused almost the entire Bande of the area to desert by using the pamphlets that we had sent to them. But they were not strong enough to hold the road against the reinforcements sent by Nasi in Gondar to bolster up the impregnable line at Keren. There was a limit to what the patriots, even when well led by an old outlaw like Misfin, could do without regular support; but when we captured Frusci's war diary for the month of March at Keren we found that there was a somewhat vaguer limit to the anxiety that their activities caused in him.

In the far south, the enemy had been cleared from his last foothold in Sudan territory. Geizzan and Kurmuk had been recaptured, in the smiling presence of the Mamur Omar Effendi El Amin. Big, black, twinkling, upright, with his grizzled head set well back on his shoulders and a noble paunch supported by a sturdy pair of bow legs, the old Mamur had set the pace for the King's African Rifles. In his pocket he had all the answers. There was the pamphlet to scatter round the streets of Kurmuk before the attack; there was the pamphlet to drop from the air if the garrison resisted; there was the pamphlet to send up to old Sitt Amna and the rest of the family of the dead Sheikh Hojali the

moment that Kurmuk fell. The Mamur went in behind Kurmuk to do his work. The pamphlet on the fall of Kurmuk was already in Asosa the day after the event that it recorded, and in the valleys surrounding Kurmuk on the day itself. The Bats came round the happy Mamur, so wise and unexplanatory behind his spectacles, and asked him: "How did the news come so quickly; we saw no aeroplane; you have no printing machine?" To this the Mamur answered in Arabic that this was just another case of the propaganda service, and left his hard-skulled borderers convinced that they must have been saved by a higher power. Sitt Amna was soon in correspondence with Geoffrey Hancock, with whom other chiefs of the Asosa district took refuge. Our purpose was served. The enemy would not be sending reinforcements from Wallega and Beni Shangul across the Nile into Gojjam for a very long time.

On the stage whose wings we helped to support, the final scene of the patriot campaign was beginning to hold its audience. The first of the wronged Kings, the most brutally used of the conquered countries, were coming into their own again. I could sit back in Khartoum, while Perry's camels crackled across the lava wrinkles, and a shirtless Andrew was figured forth in the world's press, to watch the appointed end of five years' injustice.



Chapter XIV

MY KINGDOM FOR A CAMEL

ON 20 January the Emperor Haile Sellassie left his Vickers Valentia in a landing-ground cleared at Umm Idla, walked a short distance with his cousin Kassa, the Ichegi Gabre Giorghis and his two sons, the Crown Prince and the Duke of Harrar, and found himself on the western bank of a dry river bed. Descending he was saluted by a Sudanese guard of honour, and a speech of dignified farewell and of good wishes was read to him by Andrew on behalf of the Kaid, "detained by events on another front." They crossed the bed, and on the other side the Ethiopian flag was raised for the first time for nearly five years on Ethiopian soil by a Royal hand. A company of the 2nd Ethiopian (Refugee) Battalion saluted as smartly as they had been able to learn, in the short time available, the management of their American Springfield rifles.

Looking back over the years to the deathbed of a man destroyed by his obedience to duty, I find in this choice of small arms a small tribute to Everett Colson, the American who was greatest of the Emperor's advisers, an unbending believer in the sanctity of treaties and an impregnable advocate of the just cause, who had fought the battle of Ethiopia from Addis and Geneva until the stuffy atmosphere of an Assembly ruled by its lobby exhausted his heart.

There were more speeches. It was lucky that Perry and the baggage of the Unit were there, for Andrew had been unable to buy champagne. So the occasion was thrice blessed in Perry's canned and irreplaceable beer, and the Emperor and his suite were taken thirty miles inside Ethiopia to a defended camp with slit trenches where they were to wait until the route to Belaya had been reconnoitred. All attempts to break through the bush with motor transport had failed.

Sixty camels carried the affairs of the Unit from the frontier to Belaya across the ever-rising foothills that Hugh

had noted from his plane. They followed the trace made by one of the Operational and Intelligence Centres, the first to enter. Even at this early hour in the approach march of Wingate's force the camels were dying and rotting by the roadside. On one incline they had to go up on their knees, and on the other side some had broken their necks.

They struck south-east from Umm Idla, and then south so as to enter the massif from the side of the Blue Nile. Unconsciously they felt their way nearer and nearer to the White Corporation trace that Uncle Robert Cheesman had marked, that Taffera Zalleka's men had reopened when they came down to Roseires for arms and the gold-braided uniform, and that Acland's company of the Sudan Frontier Battalion had cleared in a heavy fortnight's march with their machetes.

Perry wrote that it was delightful to jog along through the day and the uninhabited waste, with only a blubber-lipped Gumz perhaps peering at the convoy unseen through the bony lace of the thorn; and to curl up to sleep at nightfall in one of the countless dry river beds across which the camels had to flounder.

A perfect rhythm grew out of this entry march. Every day at a regular hour before dawn the caravan loaded up (shidded, said the Sudanese) and at a regular hour after nightfall unloaded. Between these two fixed points it did nothing but advance at the steady slouching rate of $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles an hour, whose rhythmic interval was uttered by the knocking lock of Perry's medicine chest. And at night there was the dumb uniform rhythm of bedding and sleep and rising before the sun. In so simple a material cycle, the mind seated on the camel's back felt in absolute peace and freedom, as one feels in a flying dream. The camels were cared for, and only two were lost; to be replaced by two foundlings discarded from an earlier convoy. They went on, day after day, through thorn and the long bleached straw of the elephant grass and through forests of bamboo. Underfoot the gravel of the ridges gave way to the rutted cotton soil of the valley bottoms in unbroken succession, till the lava spills of the mountain were reached. The ridges were

always there, like the lines of an exercise-book in their consistent spacing, but meeting them breast on, like a petrified surge of ocean. And for the last four days Belaya also was always there; that was the time that it took them to walk round the base after they thought that they had reached their journey's end. As they camped, the blush of a new comet stood on the western horizon behind them.

The Emperor had a harder entry to his own, because they insisted for a long time on bringing him to Belaya by lorry.

He sat for eight days in the defended camp by the river Dinder, while Wingate went ahead in two Sudan Defence Force trucks to blaze a road by compass to Belaya. On 27 January a runner came in from Wingate saying that he was making good progress and that the Emperor should follow.

Andrew and Boyle, the commander of the 2nd Ethiopian Battalion, escorted the Emperor and his suite in their Khartoum market lorries, hired at the last moment, across country to Abu Wendi, a hummock of hills holding a deep stagnant pool in a hand of volcanic rock that radiates heat fiercely throughout the day. They first smelt here the signature smell, the nose-motif of the Gojjam campaign. The first camels had died here and lay about in brown rotting lumps. In the middle of them they spent three nights. It was the only watering-point within a radius of twenty-five miles, and peopled by a colony of Hamej related to the hills-men of Abu Ramle that Geoffrey had armed to prise the Italian out of Gubba.

Camelmen told Andrew that there was a direct camel track from Abu Wendi to Belaya which would take them six or seven days. But Wingate had been certain that they could and must reach Belaya by 30 January, and on the evening of that day they received another message from him telling them to follow in his tracks by lorry, with as little baggage as possible. The going was good and water plentiful. They could camp "at a pool where the elephants drink." Wingate, by a rapid calculus of map, compass and speedometer, estimated that he was writing this grubby note

from a point only twenty miles from Belaya. He saw no reason why he should not be able to reach it easily by M.T.

So they sorted baggage and reduced the numbers of the Emperor's suite (including Andrew) from seventy to twenty and piled everything into three rickety lorries. The Emperor sat in the first between Andrew and the driver, Sergeant Whiffin; the old Ras Kassa and the Grand Prior and the great Dedjasmatches followed behind. Boyle, now much thinner than the Kenya settler and car agent with whom I had tiddled at the Muthaiga Club, Nairobi, two years back, commanded the skeleton company of his battalion that formed the escort. The rest were told to go by camel direct to Belaya.

They left the volcanic cluster on 31 January, and there was no doubt that they would be at Belaya by the evening of 1 February; no doubt at all, for the compass cannot lie.

They did a total of twenty-six miles that day. Wingate's wheels led northerly along the Italian patrol track from Gubba to Metemma for eighteen miles, and then struck off east, later south-east through the toughest bush. By night-fall they had reached a waterless point eight miles from the patrol road, after a day's going through undergrowth and the heat that Andrew briefly described as "hell."

Next day, without water, they did less. The lorries were slowly cracking up. On 1 February, after making twelve miles they arrived at Wingate's pool, encircled with the droppings of elephant. They had taken a lot of exercise that day, climbing in and out of the lorries to dig their tails out of ditches or to support their sides on rough inclines or to make stone bridges over sand. The old Ras, greatest of past Ethiopian governors, My Cousin of Salale and Gondar, swung ahead on foot in his brown cloak with a rifle on his shoulder; beside him in black robes and under a black silk kaftan, the remote, gentle, handsome Itchegi legged it, with his silver cross wrapped in silk in his hand. Even so went Ethiopian State and Church. The Emperor told Andrew, to Andrew's disbelief, that there were fish in this pool. He proved it by taking a mosquito net out of his bedding roll and dragging the pond. The net brought up thirty fish, the

biggest of which was six ounces, and the company ate and were thankful.

On 2 February they discarded one of the lorries whose tyres were worn out, and covered ten miles. The contents of the lorry were handed over to their inevitable helpmeet, the camels.

The little man was now rather bored with hopping in and out over Sergeant Whiffin, and accepted Boyle's invitation to mount his horse. His place in the lorry was taken by the enormous, good-natured Dedjasmach Makonnen Endalkatchu, who was married to the Emperor's favourite niece, Shash-Werk ("Gold Muslin") and had been Ethiopian Minister at the Court of St. James. A few minutes later the lorry rolled over on a slope. Its superstructure, in no sense Imperial when it left Khartoum, had been loosened by the buffeting through rock thorn and gully and the butting-down of underbrush. While the Emperor gently smiled, Andrew, Makonnen and Whiffin sorted themselves out. Better to have survived here than to have died on some of the hillsides that they had covered. Somehow or other they emptied the lorry, set it rightside up by main force, reloaded and continued.

Ten miles that day brought them at sunset to a camp which they had no compunction in calling Road's End, because even Wingate had given up the struggle here four days back and left his two trucks in the care of a Greek called Caralambo, going on by horse alone. The trucks stood forlorn in a large unmapped river bed that still held much water in deep rock pools, very sweet. Optimism had clearly been radiated on Caralambo, who said cheerfully that Belaya was only ten miles on; another case of infection was Anderson, the Reuter correspondent, who had followed Wingate on foot from this point with a pocketful of dates, and who was later only saved from disaster by staggering into Perry's caravan. . . . Thus Fleet Street came back to its ink and its heaving loads of newsprint in the uncharted bush.

A little unconvinced, Andrew and Boyle parked their suite at Road's End, and rode round on ponies at dawn on the

3rd to reconnoitre. They found that they were only a few miles from the direct camel track, on which lay stranded beside a dead beast Andrew's bed-roll and food-box.

Wingate rode in that evening on a filthy horse, with a British sergeant and three exhausted mules. Wingate made an intellectual point of not washing on campaign, but today he looked dirtier than usual, his hair matted, his chin a dusty stubble and the long trousers that he wore pricked with thorn. The lantern jaws were not illuminated by the usual sarcastic smile when he said that they were still fifty miles from Belaya, and ordered that the Emperor with two or three Ethiopians, Andrew and Boyle in attendance, should leave with him on the following day.

So they rode six miles on the evening of the 4th, and thirty on the 5th. The 5th was the grimmest day of all, the track leading them over low stony hills where the tough bamboos had been lately burned out by bush fires, where they knew from the scene, from the fine black hot dust that rose beneath their horses' feet and (when they dismounted) from their own blisters, that their camels were almost certain to die. There was no risk of losing the way now, for it was pointed by the carcasses of dead or still heaving camels and it was musical with the wings of flies, and if one needed a compass of longer range, there was always the stink upon the next ridge to which one could point one's nostrils. Next day they were at Belaya at last, and Hugh, who had entered by the easier southern route, negotiable by the fall of Gubba, greeted them in his camp below the colossal cliffs. Wingate said bluntly to him, "You were right and I was wrong."

For the Gojjam patriot campaign of which Wingate was now given the command in the field (Dan becoming a Brigadier and Principal Political and Military Adviser to the Emperor), 18,000 camels were hired from first to last, with volunteer drivers from the Sudan. Fifteen thousand never came back.

It was an unavoidable sacrifice. Wingate had to plan ahead for a campaign of nine months between Belaya and Addis Ababa, for nobody at this time believed that all

Ethiopia except Gondar would be won before the mid-year rains of 1941. It seemed impossible that one Sudanese and one Ethiopian Refugee Battalion should sweep more than ten times their number out of Gojjam in two months from now.

In Wingate's plan, food and munitions for the entire rainy season had to be got up to Belaya as rapidly as possible; there was no hope of driving a motor road up to the Gojjam escarpment from the Sudan and during the rains the mule-tracks would be unusable.

There were no mules in the Sudan, and no mules could be got out of Ethiopia. In the event, the camels that brought the stores up to Belaya had to complete the haul up the precipitous escarpment and follow the army throughout the campaign.

At the same time, continual efforts were made to engineer a road for lorries into Gojjam. The country was fired far and wide by the engineers to clear its great mat of bush, and several valuable graders were destroyed on its stubborn surface.

Loads for camels were carefully calculated, and on the numbers available it was found that the camels could not carry their own fodder if the programme was to be completed to time and the Gojjam army were not to starve. They would have to find their grazing by the side of the track.

There was little grazing, and much of that had been burned away by the engineers and by spontaneous bush fires. The going was cold lava covered with patches of cotton soil and gravel and studded with rock where camels stooped and slithered and broke their legs and groaned themselves dead.

Yet, without them, in a plan that had to be improvised out of a million pounds Egyptian between November 1940 and January 1941, the entry into Gojjam could never have been made. That was Perry's judgment as he sat on a rocky hill far from the track and saw the brown specks sawing their way slowly towards him, so slow and so brown that they were invisible to the two Italian aircraft that circled aimlessly above.

It was the Emperor's opinion too. On one day he counted fifty-seven of the animals dead or dying on the track. It did not seem a good augury for the campaign, but he was used to the sight of failure around him. With the usual smile that accepted inevitable things like the reversal of Andrew Makonnen and Whiffin, he pointed to one heap of bones and said, "He died for Ethiopia."

Chapter XV

SESAME TO A SCARP

JUST before the Emperor's entry into Ethiopia Dan had finally won over the chiefs of Tumha and Chara, who ran the Italian irregular Bande guarding the approaches to Dangila up the great escarpment. They were the brothers of Fitorari Taffere Zelleka of Belaya, one of the best of our loyal chiefs though he lived in a starving district; their father was the same old Fitorari Zelleka Liku who came down to the Sudan border and poached ivory for his liege lord Ras Hailu when Uncle Robert sustained the Union Jack in Dangila. But they had stuck to the Italians because they lived under the very frown of Torelli and his five brigades in Dangila, and he would burn their villages and seize their cattle if they misbehaved. But now the Emperor was coming. They deserted to a man.

There remained the powerful chief Fitorari Zelleka Birru, who, with one other, Kenyasmach Darassu, ruled the territories of Zegam, Matakal and Wanbera for the Italians, and whose Bande thus sealed the centre and south of the scarp against us, protecting the enemy garrisons (a brigade apiece) at Burye and Debra Markos. Dan asked for pamphlets to be thrown on his country, and they were. They told him that all the other chiefs had abandoned the Italians and if he did not do likewise within five days he would be attacked by Mangasha.

The Emperor's arrival on Belaya did more than we could do with paper and words. In a few days Zelleka Birru prostrated himself before him and put his Bande into his hand. The escarpment, a series of positions along crests as sharp as those at Keren, lay wide open to our miniature army.

There came swarming down it, making like automatic ants to the great heap of Belaya, Ethiopians in their hundreds daily, with letters held up in forked sticks in their right hands, to ask for arms, cotton, salt, munitions, to bow and to boast,

and to return and say that he was there; with printed pardons in their hands. The Propaganda Unit were now pushing and beating the backsides of their beasts, Press and all, up the forested crevasses of the scarp; and the enemy sat immobile in his fortresses amid a growling, rumour-riddled countryside, waiting for the zero hour to withdraw in some semblance of order.

As they surmounted the last thousand feet from the dreary plain the heights grew richly green and the Unit found itself, like Jack, in Beanstalk Land. There was village after village on this folded territory. Haycocks sat in their time-honoured crookedness on the slopes of lush valleys, where streams of water reflecting a blue sky played on the tired feet of the convoy. Huge, flat-topped acacias dripping creepers and liana ropes and lichen shed a mediæval gloom in the passes, where heavy-doored Coptic churches, round and closed, and woodenly slumbering, gave evidence of an ineradicable faith. The ploughboy of the Amharas in his short dirty jodhpurs cracked a long whip over his zebu ox and bowed low to the strange company, as the English ploughboy would have wished them the top of the morning. Near the pool stood the rest of the sleek herd. Ladies with small boyish faces walked openly along in sweeping petticoats, their skins protected from a pale sun by straw parasols trimmed with red. The chief of the community would be injured if one did not send him a long screed asking how he was, and thank God oneself was well, and announcing that one was entering his district. That would give him time to rustle up chickens and *injura* bread and prepare a peppery *wot* and pour out the honey wine into cool jars, as the unalterable laws of hospitality in an antique civilisation demand when a distinguished stranger comes into one's boundaries with his household armed with rifles. Is the *wot* good enough? Do you enjoy the *tej*? How have you passed the season of the dry in the Sudan? Is it true that the Emperor is there? Is it true that the French are fighting for the Italians? What is the attitude of Japan? Everything in this western edge of the true Gojjam was as if the Italians had never been there. The Unit distributed the

confetti stamped with the golden lion, which the women took and laced in their fuzzy hair and the young men stuck upon their foreheads. The megaphonists in the Unit marching through rose-bordered cornfields and beside the silent tree-bound lakes laid in the cones of extinct volcanoes grew excited, and began to try out by song upon each other the speeches which they would make outside the enemy's encampment. They unfurled the gorgeous seals that had been made for them by that kindly organ of the General Staff in Cairo.

Chapter XVI

HIP AND THIGH

WINGATE had told me that he would attack Dangila as soon as he had assembled his forces in Belaya, but the Italians were too quick for him. On 16 February, when only one company of the Frontier Battalion was up on the escarpment, Colonel Torelli withdrew from Dangila along the road to Bahrdar Giorgis. Within a few weeks he had withdrawn all the outlying garrisons of Alefa and Achefer, Zeghie and Debra Mai, Meschenti and Addiet to the little town on the southern shore of Lake Tana, where he had boats ready to evacuate his total of nine battalions to Gondar.

Torelli abandoned northern Gojjam because he had been unable to stamp that country flat, with his enormously superior forces. Mangasha and his leading Fitorari Ayelu Makonnen had been too good for him, and in the end had played the Italian command to a mental collapse. In the past two months he had gone out time and again with a Battalion or two and his beloved Bande to swat these and their smaller attendant flies, but he had missed. On the way home they would snipe his flanks and rear, kill a few, capture their rifles and tell the countryside that they had won the battle; and the countryside was beginning to believe, for Torelli had nothing to show but the sweat on his brow for his activity. Then the escarpment Bande went, and the great whisper went round, "He himself is here." For many a year the Italians had told all visitors that the Gojjam revolt was just the work of a few brigands, and that if the Emperor entered Gojjam he, a hated Shoan, would have his throat cut. Torelli did not wait to see this done. What is more, Nasi in Gondar wanted to have a reserve handy in case he had to send troops—as he did send them—to help *caro Frusci* at Keren; and Nasi knew that northern Gojjam was irrecoverable.

A great Italian military road ran through Gojjam north and south roughly parallel with the line of the escarpment,

through the towns where she placed her major garrisons. From Bahrdar Giorghis to Dangila, Enjabara under its granite sugar-loaf, Burye, Demebecha, Jigga, Emanuel, Debra Markos; and thence across the Shafartak ford of the Blue Nile to Addis Ababa. On the same day that Dangila was abandoned, Colonel Natale commanding the garrison at Burye came out of that town and relieved the two battalions in Enjabara.

Both these withdrawals were harassed by the patriots, and several hundred men of Gojjam deserted from the Italian columns on the march. But the great bulk of the forces got away unscathed to their new bolt-holes. Wingate had to alter his plan.

He invested Bahrdar Giorghis with one Company—some 300 men—of the Sudan Frontier Battalion and one of his Ethiopian Operational Centres, 180 strong. This remarkable little force sat outside Bahrdar Giorghis for nearly two months and rudely cut short two attempts by Torelli to break back on the rear of Wingate's main army with five battalions at a time. They defeated an enemy equipped with artillery and cavalry, themselves having neither of these arms. These were clear military victories, made possible only by the fighting qualities of the Sudanese soldier and the strict training that the Kaid and Hugh had imposed upon him. On the first occasion the force was commanded by a young Sudanese 2nd Lieutenant; the British officers were out on reconnaissance. When they returned in the middle of the battle the boy—he was twenty-one—explained precisely the dispositions that he had taken and the strength of the enemy; and the troops broke off for a minute to get up one by one and shake hands smiling and say, "Wallahid! How happy we are that you are safe." Reliable and steady, incapable of leaving a position except by the orders of his officer or more forcefully still upon a stretcher, and instructed to a high standard of accuracy in rifle and Bren-gun fire, the Sudanese with his loose, long, wary tread, green cummerbund and khaki turban and black smile as long as the grooves cut in childhood in his cheeks was to give our arms a heroic reputation. Towards the end of the campaign the sight of

one turban on a hillside was declared by Wingate to be worth a hundred men. The Italians signalled in a way especially wormish and their own their fear of the Sudanese when they withdrew from Gojjam. They then took the only three Sudanese that they had ever captured, put them against a cliff and killed two with revolvers, while the third escaped. (Having thus shown the Roman military prowess to the grandsons of the men who died at Omdurman, the Italians fled across the Blue Nile from the rest of the Frontier Battalion; but let me not anticipate as rapidly as they were wont to do.)

Three companies of the Frontier Battalion, the 2nd Ethiopian Battalion, No. 1 Operational Centre, a platoon of 4 mortars and the Field Propaganda Unit assembled under Wingate at Enjabara on 23 February. They found in the fort a month's supply of rations for the entire force, which from now on was able to live on the country, for the Italians left much in every post evacuated. The only serious administrative difficulty for us in Gojjam was provided by the patriots, who tried to loot and burn everything Italian that they could lay their hands on. They smashed Dangila thoroughly, but did not get in first anywhere else. That was one important use, Wingate found, for the Operational Centres. . . . police.

Seven hundred camels also came up the scarp to Enjabara, and 200 mules were collected there. These and the men that he led Wingate called Gideon Force because Gideon beat his enemies hip and thigh. David would perhaps have been a better name, for in no single engagement were they ever to be more than a quarter the size of the enemy whom they were opposing.

Gideon Force marched south to Burye on 25 February, at night, Wingate leading the way with pistol drawn. At the head of the column he lit fires to point the road, and there were soon raging red giants over the downs of Gojjam. They roared awake the sleeping villagers, who came out to gape at the four miles of column, for the camels were padding to Gideon's natural meagreness. The propagandists explained

to the population what it was all about. Burye was going to be demolished by this enormous army, the like of which had never been seen in Gojjam. But it was nothing to the army that was coming up the escarpment with the Emperor. The echo of this resounded to distant Debra Markos, where it was said that the English and the Emperor were in irresistible force, and that the English not only had huge stores of Maria Theresa dollars, but their rifles were each made to fire twelve shots in quick succession.

At Burye they were very alarmed indeed. The whole countryside was hostile and more British troops—actually it was the small bodyguard of the Emperor and the base organisation of the Frontier Battalion—were coming through the Matakal gap. Natale could not make up his mind when to run away. He waited until it was too late to do so without loss of prestige and material. Wingate was already round him.

The 2nd Ethiopian Battalion had been sent down to Dembecha to make a determined attack on the fort there, which was held by one or two native battalions. The rest of the force were to tackle the forts to the east of Burye, at the very gate of the Italians' withdrawal.

The series of actions that followed, and that after six days of skirmish and violent assault obliged Natale to quit with all his men and all but destroyed his entire force, deserve a place in military history because of the novelty of the methods used; bluff, propaganda, fifth columnism, exploitation of night and cover were the elements in a war of nerves that broke the Italians down.

Wingate liked fighting for its own sake. He led off the battle of Burye with an attack on her eastern fort in broad daylight on 27 February, using two platoons only. This piece of impertinence almost led him into disaster, for he became deeply engaged and was counter-attacked by a squadron of cavalry from Burye Central. Once more the Sudanese proved their mettle, holding their Bren fire until the horse were nearly there, then tearing the formation to pieces. Wingate was able to withdraw, but a company of the Frontier Battalion harassed the fort all night and drew a

brave display of Italian wind from every orifice in it, which belched shells and machine-gun belts and an insomnia of rifle-fire until the dawn. Two days later the enemy evacuated Burye East towards the centre.

The scene in the centre of this upland province of Burye-Damot is of placid plains where cattle feed and few trees grow except like gaffer's fringes on the green knolls that go to form a "town." Such was Burye. About five knolls constituted it, so that it was two less (if I remember rightly) than tribal Rome. Each knoll was an Italian fort, and the enemy's cavalry was in theory master of the intervening plain, about one mile wide between knoll and knoll. To the south-east some ten miles away, at the side of the main road to Debra Markos, a higher ridge stuck up into the sharp wind that came like a broom in the evening across Burye-Damot and put a flavour into its celebrated grain harvest. Here in the trees a church could just be descried. The place was called Mankusa, and it was the first of the Italians' rest-camps on the line of retreat. It was held now by something like two companies: we did not quite know.

Wingate now ordered a joint operation against Mankusa.

For the last time in this campaign the bombers of the R.A.F. co-operated with day and night attacks on Burye, while the operation was mounted against Mankusa. The church was seized, 500 yards from the fort, a Vickers machine-gun of the 2nd Ethiopians was put into it, and a mortar dug in nearby. The first shot of the mortar fell half-way across no-man's-land, the second fell well among our allies, the patriots of Fitorari Zelleka Desta, who were waiting commendably close to attack, the third was lucky and set the main fort buildings ablaze. By the flames, that flickered in every window and peep-hole and made of Mankusa a great pleasure-cruise liner sailing through the tropical night, harassing fire was maintained until day broke. Our five chief megaphonists shouted propaganda the first night at 400 yards, the second night at 200. An Eritrean shumbashi (company-sergeant-major) shouted back when there was a pause of fire, but they had already lost dozens of men to desertion, and they had to tie many others up. Because he insulted the

Emperor, the Eritrean was man-handled by others when he stopped. Finally, the fort cattle were stampeded by female patriots.

Mankusa could not have lasted for many more hours when in the morning of 4 February the Italian aircraft that usually protected the flanks of a big withdrawal appeared from the south flying low, and Natale's troops came pouring out of Burye forts like a great tongue of dirty molasses dropping from a spoon, in the distance an unrelieved mass of black and brown, seven thousand men.

Italy wanted to leave Burye before it was too late. She had forgotten the motives that a week before had proscribed withdrawal—the danger of increased desertions and lowered prestige in the countryside, the simple fact that Burye was not imperilled. Burye *was* in danger from the huge and ubiquitous British army that had almost compassed the fall of Mankusa and was fiercely attacking Dembecha. If they could capture these two forts, the British would have completely cut the retreat of Natale's brigade. He therefore withdrew through Mankusa. In the process he all but destroyed the command of Gideon, for Wingate was still attacking Mankusa in person at dawn on 4 March, with a couple of platoons and the now raucous propagandists. He and they had to run for their lives, he to a ridge where Hugh was coolly eating his breakfast; Wingate furiously asked him why he had not been there to support with two Frontier Battalion companies. "Because," said Hugh, "there would then have been no Gideon at all. Have some breakfast."

The clotted Italian column, twenty files across wherever there was order in it, swarmed down the road through Mankusa to Jigga and Dembecha. Disorderly Bande protected its flanks. Four armoured cars and an Italian officer with a flag led the 4,000 regular troops in the centre. Two regiments of cavalry brought up the rear, ready to deploy on either flank and hold the Bande. With the troops were the women and children of a long occupation and the chiefs who feared a vengeance from Nagash. As it passed, the two companies of the Frontier Battalion and Hugh closed behind it and the commander of the British army himself followed

when he had collected his Headquarters, consisting of his Palestinian clerk Akavia and an overcoat slung between two thornbushes next a field wireless. In these great rushes after the Italian everybody swapped jobs in Gideon Force. Perry took charge of the camel train, now 400 strong, because he spoke good Arabic and they had to be hustled up and at the same time remain invisible in their inelegant enormity from the air. Sultan Gabre Medhin took charge of the Propaganda Unit and was issued by Wingate with a machine-gun. His little force slung their megaphones behind their backs and went straight into the Italian flanks, where they slaughtered a group of Bande and Sultan himself shot an Italian major and stripped him of his shoulder tabs, which he later threw in front of the Emperor.

On the nights of the 4th and the 5th of March the two companies of the Frontier Battalion attacked the enemy's camp upon the road. He camped with little order, his transport in the centre, hundreds of twinkling fires around it, most of his troops too tired or frightened or unwilling to stand guard. At nightfall the Battalion moved up its few Bren guns and bracketed them on the fires, and when the fires had gone out began to shoot and went on throughout the night. Behind them and round them Wingate himself was roving, and yelling on his wireless to Khartoum for more ammunition. A few lorries and a small cache of undestroyed petrol had been found at Burye. South African Junkers aircraft flew the war material up from Roseires to Burye landing-ground. The transport was just enough to bring up the copious munitions needed for a running fight in which the main enemy is the other side's morale.

There was nothing left to carry food. So Gideon had to fight without food for three days.

Nobody knew where the command was, except that he might turn up anywhere on his grey horse. Nobody in the Frontier Battalion quite knew where Hugh was; but they knew that he was pattering from hill to hill in his old suède shoes, waving his stick at each half section in turn and giving it tactical instructions whose minutiae—and they were very minute—changed from moment to moment. On the third

day some of his officers saw a pot of enemy jam in the road and fell upon it.

By then the enemy had been shouldered through Jigga and across the Latch river, and were approaching Dembecha. A silent prayer was put up in Khartoum for the 2nd Ethiopian Battalion. They were out of touch with Wingate; they had no wireless; they could only know that the enemy was approaching from the sound of battle; but they could not tell in what force he was.

On the 6th Boyle heard the continuous musketry over the hills, down the flowering hedgerows of Gojjam. He took the right decision and planted the whole of his Battalion across the road behind a watercourse to the west of Dembecha. At this moment he had some 400 men under command, who settled themselves behind bushes and got their Vickers and Boyes guns into place. They were just ready when the Italian swarm, led by the armoured cars, topped the rise above their river bed and thorn-thickets and started to pour down the incline. On the wings of the Italians there was a continual popping of rifles as they were engaged at long range by patriots and the brigand *franc-tireurs*, the *fannos*, all of them out for uniforms, rifles, ammunition, any kind of loot; these woolly-haired irregulars screamed as they discharged their rusty guns.

An Ethiopian of the Refugee Battalion ran up the road towards the enemy, while the Englishmen near him held their breath. He judged their distance and their speed of approach, then ran back. Next time he ran forward he carried a Boyes rifle, which he placed carefully at a bend and fired as soon as the first armoured car came in sight. Direct hit; stopped. The second car came round. Direct hit; stopped. Somebody else flattened the Italian officer with the flag. With the same care the Ethiopian removed the breech of his Boyes rifle, for the other two armoured cars had moved to the flanks, and ran back to the line, from which a terrific fire broke into the astonished mass of the Italian native infantry.

Wingate was calling on the wireless for air support. It is a fact that if bombing aircraft had been available the 7,000

troops that came out of Burye would have dispersed and surrendered on this day. They were sheep's bodies without spirit, totally demoralised. Twelve hundred had deserted. With 400 semi-trained Ethiopians ahead of them and 400 skilled Sudanese behind, pinked from either side by wild wolf-like men, completely bamboozled by propaganda about the size of our force, they could only think of fighting if it would cut a way to safety. Nearly 200 killed lay on the ground in front of the 2nd Ethiopian Battalion and 1,000 more had been carried off wounded to the flanks before the Italian mass bore through their positions. Even then the enemy did not stop to fight. He must get to the walls of Dembecha, that was all. The bulk of the Battalion had remarkable escapes. Some lay under rocks, others dived into pools, others climbed trees, others tore their way into thickets. The only casualties were ninety men killed and wounded; and on their way through the Italians swept up the Battalion camel transport with the British officer in charge.

Outside Dembecha Gideon had his first meal. But the enemy were not staying there either. Natale ran south on 8 March, and on the 10th he burned down and abandoned Fort Emanuel on the river Tamcha and struggled on to Debra Markos.

Thus in his panic, torn every night by the experts in dark warfare of the Frontier Battalion, whose puttees and boots were now in holes and their blankets long since abandoned, Natale disobeyed the instructions given to him by his commanding officer Nasi. He should have defended the river Tamcha, which Wingate and Hugh now crossed in ragged triumph. Not that their ways of filling in the gaps that intervene even in this exhausting warfare were identical. Wingate would not wash even when he saw water staring him in the face, but was given rather to *yogi* and the singing of twangy strophe and antistrophe that may have been psalms, the while he scratched a filthy leg. Hugh somehow wore a different pair of pants and vest every day so as not to become lousy, and he must have been thinking already of the champagne that he would capture in Debra Markos.

Wingate when he met two or three officers together would give them a lecture on the principles of the campaign. Hugh would catch them excitedly by the shoulder and whistle them off to separate jobs that, it had just struck him, were worth doing, old chap.

On 13 March—two days before the last great offensive at Keren began—Gideon was in contact with the enemy on the Guliat positions a few miles west of Debra Markos. Here were concentrated the whole of his forces in Gojjam except for the battalions contained by Simmonds' small command at Bahrdar Giorghis and for one battalion at Mota in eastern Gojjam. Ras Hailu was hurriedly summoned from his place at Bichenna to the east of Debra Markos and came in great style with a well-armed Bande of 6,000 and his Alfa Romeo car, to play the cool game that we had come to expect of him, to defend and yet not to defend Debra Markos, to sit without any demonstration of discomfort on a fence made of barbed wire.¹

¹ Appendix F.

Chapter XVII

THE LAST LINE-UP

TOWARDS the end of March 1941, when the Italians were pinned finally at Keren, Addis Ababa and Debra Markos and were soon to lose all of them, it was possible to weigh the effect upon them of the regular and the irregular campaign waged against them from the Sudan, and to see in straight figures how much the patriot movement subtracted from the enemy's total of hitting power.

At Keren and at Amba Alagi, where the Kaid smashed up the remainder of the armies of Eritrea and the garrison of Addis Ababa, seventy-one Italian and native battalions were liquidated. The pressure was so severe that the whole of the Savoia Division of Grenadiers, the best troops in the Empire, were eventually drawn off and destroyed by the army of the Sudan.

In the wide area of insurrection among the Amhara, spreading from Om Hager on the Sudan frontier to Addis Ababa, fifty-six enemy battalions had been pinned down by the action of patriots and of Gideon, including twenty-six Italian Blackshirt battalions. This did not account for the numerous irregular Bande groups who were also used for internal security, and the battalions who had been operating against our Indian troops at Metemma are also not part of the total.

Part of these forces, mainly Blackshirts, were kept in big towns such as Addis Ababa and Dessie to protect the white population. Their inability to perform any other role was demonstrated by the ease with which both towns were captured by British armies numerically inferior to themselves. It became evident then that the main purpose of the Blackshirt organisation in East Africa was to hold the Abyssinians down.

The main concentrations, however, were in the principal centres of revolt; Gojjam and Begemder (Gondar). In the first of these there were sixteen native and four Blackshirt

battalions; in the second two native and twelve Blackshirt battalions. These were the areas where war against the Italians had been endemic since 1937, and the very small outlay that we made on Wingate's force and on propaganda was justified by the pegging of such disproportionate enemy numbers to the soil.

When Uncle Robert or I had interrogated the first chiefs to cross the frontier and visit the Emperor in Khartoum, we had always asked them what they wanted in order to occupy Italian forts. They answered that they needed arms, British aircraft to drop bombs and propaganda, and last of all, the Sign.

We asked them what they meant by the Sign.

English troops advancing into our country, they replied; and now they had what they wanted in the 1,800 men, a small brigade, who followed Wingate against the fragile 20,000 who garrisoned Gojjam.

Wingate's method was not to issue arms to the patriots at their request, but to give them an example of guerrilla warfare. I asked him months after he had left Ethiopia to describe his principles, and he showed them already written down on a piece of paper.

Wrong Method

On entering the area, the commander gets in touch with the local patriot leader, and after an exhortation, suggests that the leader can do something to help carry out some operation. The patriot at once replies that he desires nothing better but has no arms, money or ammunition. The commander asks how much he wants. He names some impracticable figure. The commander promises a fraction, which he hands over and waits for results. These are nil. He may even sit about in an attempt to conduct this operation and stimulate the patriot to exertion. Result still nil; or possibly bogus reports of activities.

The patriot argues thus: "This person evidently needs my (very inefficient) help; so much that he is willing to part with arms he must know I have only the most rudimentary idea of how to use. Ergo, he has no one better to use them. He evidently has no one to fight for him, and so is prepared

to give me this substantial bribe. Therefore he must be in a weak position, and may well be beaten. If that happens, I shall be in the soup. That is an argument for not fighting, but no argument for not taking what he offers. It is, of course, true that I should like to help the cause, and there can be no question of my betraying him. But I must face facts. Why should I die without hope of victory? And there is my family and village to consider. I think on the whole that the best and kindest way will be to accept the help with gratitude; to hold it on trust in case some day I can use it safely against the common enemy, and, meanwhile, to get to learn how to use it by settling once and for all that dispute over the water with the Smiths."

Right Method

The commander enters the area with a small but highly efficient column with modern equipment and armament, but none to give away. On meeting the patriot he says he has come to fight for the common cause but preserves an air of secrecy and confidence regarding the action he intends to take. The patriot asks what he can do. The commander replies, "Give me supplies, which I will purchase at a fair price, and pass me information."

The patriot goes away thinking—"This is curious. The force is very small, but no doubt much larger ones are at hand, or he wouldn't be so confident. I wonder why he didn't ask my help? I'd better watch this."

The following night, the commander carries out a successful night attack. Next day comes the patriot saying, "Why didn't you tell me you intended to attack? I could have been of great help to you."

"Oh, well, you have no arms, and you're not a soldier. And, after all, why should you get killed? This is our job."

"But I am a soldier, and have been fighting the enemy for years. Only tell me what you want me to do, and I will show you we can do it."

"But you have no arms or ammunition, and I have none to spare."

"It is true that I have very little ammunition, but what I have I want to use in support of my flag."

"Very well, come along with me this afternoon. I am making a reconnaissance, and can probably find some useful

job for your followers. But I shall judge you by results, and if you make a mess of it, I shan't be able to use you again."

Result—the patriot rushes to the fray with keenness and devotion. He regards the commander as his leader. It is a privilege to help him.

Now the essence of this lesson is that to raise a real fighting revolt you must send in a *corps d'élite* to do exploits and not pedlars of war material and cash. . . . We can hope that the rare occasional brave man will be stirred to come to us and risk his life to help our cause. This is what is of value to us.

All the rest—the rush of the tribesmen, the peasants with billhooks, is hugaboo.

That was like Wingate: brilliant, certain, and half right.

It missed an essential in the contribution of the Ethiopian patriot to the cause. Of course the rush of the tribesmen, the peasants with billhooks, meant nothing. But the Italians did not think, in the bottom of their hearts, that it meant nothing.

They dominated the communications of the country by keeping x battalions at A and y battalions at B. In this way they could prevent Ethiopians from coming together, combining against them, and securing arms and training from us. If they abandoned A, the whole area would come openly over to our side; the next area would be permeated and its communications attacked; desertions from their colonial troops would increase as they saw an ordered government across the provincial frontier and found that if they left the Italians they were not immediately stripped of their rifles and coats and trousers. It was thus the very fear of a patriot snowball growing, call it a tribesman's rush if you will, that kept fifty-six battalions anchored in Amhara territory and kept their own morale down.

The arrival of Gideon was a chemical solvent to this situation in suspense. The Frontier Battalion above all, and the 2nd Ethiopian Battalion secondly, were the spearhead of an advance through Gojjam that would never have happened without them. They went so fast that Wingate frankly never had a chance to organise co-operation on a grand

scale with the slow-moving patriots, incapable as these were of ever presenting themselves ready for action at zero hour. Therefore the exemplary method that he advocates was forced upon him, and he would have been wasteful of his time (the worst offence in war) if he had attempted any other.

Nevertheless, Hugh and the patriots that Dan had already taught to co-operate, with the moral power of the Emperor behind them, netted fifty-six enemy battalions that might have been used at Keren against our regular troops. They were of incalculable value to our war effort. Just as Ethiopia would never have been free again without the expenditure of British, Indian and Sudanese blood on those grim cliffs, so also Britain would not have wound up the Ethiopian campaign and freed her vital communications as early as she did if it had not been for the Ethiopian patriot movement; 56 : 71 is not an unfair division of the credit to the two parties.

These are important calculations that I make, because they affect the whole future of warfare. The Ethiopian campaign was an essay on a sand-table, remote from the risk of the loss of large Imperial forces, of the kind of war which we should wage against all systems tyrannising over a conquered population like the Abyssinians and beginning to become dependent (as Germany became in 1941) on their subject allies for cannon-fodder.

The Ethiopian patriot movement that we fanned with our propaganda is a small candle held to the bonfire that could be raised in Europe by the combination of small *corps d'élite*, and propaganda contact with oppressed populations. We would probably find a large proportion of the latter as pusillanimous as were many Ethiopian patriots, but they give us a weapon which handled coolly could tie down the enemy everywhere in Europe, while we fight our Keren against him on our own chosen ground. Modern guerrilla war is *not* the wild rush of the tribesmen or the peasants' billhooks: it is the idea of fear, of revenge in the dark, the unwillingness to abandon this or that territory for reasons of prestige until the opportunity to do so without disgrace has passed—it is these things all combined that paralyse an

enemy and spread-eagle half his fighting forces to the ground. In fact, the subject populations will do little, as the Ethiopians did little, until they see the Sign. And yet by that little done they will have done half their job, and won nearly half the war. We move to the period when guerrilla war becomes, because of the alarm caused to the conquered by modern regular weapons, a propaganda-bound offensive inertia, awaiting the chemical solvent and the day when the enemy's corpses will be stripped. I hope that on that day we will suffer from as little moral disgust as afflicted me during the Gojjam campaign, when I heard that the patriots and *fannos* who sniped the battlefield of the 2nd Ethiopians before Dembecha, later dug up the Italian dead to take the tunics of which, by lingering in the wilderness for five years, they had for that period been deprived.

Chapter XVIII

KEREN

MY visit to the front at Keren had borne fruit in two pamphlets, one for the Keren positions, and the other for the positions in front of Arresa, to the south of Keren, whither the remains of the enemy's 2nd Division had withdrawn in disorder from Barentu. It was part of the Kaid's final plan for Keren to make a feint attack at Arresa with most of his light mechanisation in order to pin potential reinforcements there; propaganda had to co-operate in this by a display of impartiality.

A peculiar situation had arisen when I left Keren. There had been a disagreement about the good taste of one of our pamphlets, and there was a gap in pamphlet-dropping. By the end of February the flow of deserters, evidently in reaction to this, had dried up.

They began again to come in dozens daily when pamphlets type 71 and 72 were dropped. These, which concentrated on special appeals to the different parts of Ethiopia represented by the troops facing us, were the most successful pamphlets of the Ethiopian war.

We had analysed the grievances of the Eritreans. The rank and file (not the N.C.O.s, yet) were getting tired of the continual wars upon which Italy exhausted them. Prisoners told me that Eritrea had been long enough a *mangad* (a road; they meant a road of military conquest). There were in the line opposite us two brigades who had for some time recruited in Shoa, the Emperor's central province; and one of them, the 11th, had its depot at Fiche in Salale, the old fief of his cousin Ras Kassa. One or two of the battalions had a lot of Gojjamis. The Emperor did not approve the particularism of these sheets, and the Imperial Seal that I put upon them was in fact a forgery. He was always very sensitive about the differences between the provinces of Ethiopia, not because he wished to hide the reality from the world but because he did not wish to perpetuate them in

Ethiopia by publicity. But at the end of a wireless it was difficult to explain the necessities of the moment at Keren, where we wanted information quickly; so I took the short cut.

On the back of 71 and 72 was the same appeal to the Eritreans, under the British Royal Arms:

Soldiers of Eritrea! Listen!

Our cowardly Italian enemy robs you of your fertile land and prevents you from cultivating the rest, and from spending your days in the breeding of cattle. He exterminates your youth in his interminable wars. In Somaliland, in Libya, in Ethiopia, and now in your own land, death is your lot, and your property, wealth and honour are the lot of the Italians. You pay them the tribute of your blood, and in return they insult you with the name of "bought flesh" (*carne venduto*).

But the day when you will be delivered of all this is come.

One English army is standing before Keren. A second army stands before Arresa and Addi Ugri. A third English and French army has taken Cubcub. Soon the Italians in Eritrea will be completely cut off by land as well as by sea.

In Gojjam the Emperor Haile Sellassie has driven the Italians back from Dangila and Enjabara to the Blue Nile.

Come over to us before the final terrible battle begins. We will receive and feed you well. Those who wish to fight under the Flag of Haile Sellassie or under the English Flag will be allowed to do so. Those who desire rest will rest.

All will see their families again quickly, but if they wait to be taken prisoner they will remain in prison until the end of the European war.

To the Amhara who were at Arresa and Addi Ugri we wrote on the back of this the following message from the Emperor, after a recital of the victories in Gojjam:

You have been eye-witnesses of the Italian disaster, how they have lost all their artillery, how they have made you march in misery without food, how thousands have deserted to the English or gone home. . . .

If they tell you to sacrifice yourselves again for their Flag on these mountains, have no fear. Say NO. You can see how demoralised and frightened they are of you from the

way that they have evacuated their civil population from the towns behind you.

There was a different message for the men at Keren:

I have occupied Dangila and Enjabara in Gojjam, after driving out two Italian brigades. From Dangila I send you this command.

Everywhere the Italians are abandoning their forts in Gojjam and fleeing north and south to the Blue Nile. The whole people has risen against them, and their Bande have abandoned them and come to me.

You too must leave the Italians and hand yourselves over to the English, our mighty allies. The English will take you to Kassala and Khartoum and send you thence to fight under my victorious Flag.

Gojjamis!

It is in faithful Gojjam that I have set up my Flag and won my first victories. Come back to your homes.

Shoans of the 2nd and the 11th Brigades!

You are of my own blood, and my own people. You were the very centre of the Ethiopian Empire and the children who lived around my house.

You must cease to fight against your own Flag and King and to die for the Italians. Come to me through the English. Ras Kassa is with me in Gojjam, and when all Gojjam is ours you will be our army to cleanse the Italians from Salale and Debra Brehan.

Already one thousand men have come to me from your brigades. They and you who remain are my chosen instruments for the liberation of Shoa and Addis Ababa.

Within a few days the direct relationship between propaganda and desertion was established again by the arrival of two hundred more deserters from the Shoan brigades alone in our lines. Dozens came again from the other battalions—but now we were too much accustomed to the flow to assess its speed. It was enough that the new askaris could readjust for us the order of the enemy's battle-line just before the battle of Keren.

We prepared something new for the Italians, whom during the retreat from Kassala we had deliberately neglected in

order that they should wonder why we were talking only in indecipherable Amharic or Tigrinya, and so re-establish their harsh inquisition among their native troops at the moment of movement when the latter would have more opportunity to desert.

Blackshirts and Savoy Grenadiers were now issued with a small pamphlet of eight pages, with two maps, describing in the coldest analytical language the British advance from Egypt to Benghazi and leaving them to draw the consequences. The advantage of this airborne publication was that it was more military in tone and more full in detail than anything that they had been given by their own side. It gave the names of all the infantry divisions involved (see Appendix G).

I knew that they would read this depressing recital. For them speedy relief from Libya was the only hope of victory. Graziani's defeat was far more important for them than for metropolitan Italy. It gave us, too, another chance to advertise the I tanks.

It was followed rapidly by a theme which is a winner with all the armies of the world. The modern soldier hates to fight without air support, and the R.A.F. had done great destruction on the aerodromes of Eritrea. Ideal propaganda is that taken straight out of the enemy's own mind, rationalised and put back again to revolve the faster. It is better than news which he has long been taught not to believe if it comes from a foreigner.

Italian Soldiers! (we said)

No army can resist indefinitely without air support.

Where are your aircraft? Why do you see them so seldom? And British aircraft so often?

WE WILL TELL YOU.

During nine months of war the R.A.F. have steadily bombed your aerodromes and aeronautical workshops. They have thus done great damage to your ground organisation and hindered the repair of your aircraft.

Since the beginning of January the R.A.F. have been using Hurricanes in ever-increasing numbers upon your grounded Air Force. These fighters with their high speed and striking

power and their skilled pilots have established their domination of the Eritrean sky.

The figures of your losses since 19 January are these, for the area of Eritrea and Northern Ethiopia only:

Shot down in combat	23
Burnt out by machine-gun attack	41
Damaged in combat	10
Damaged by low-flying machine-gun attack	41

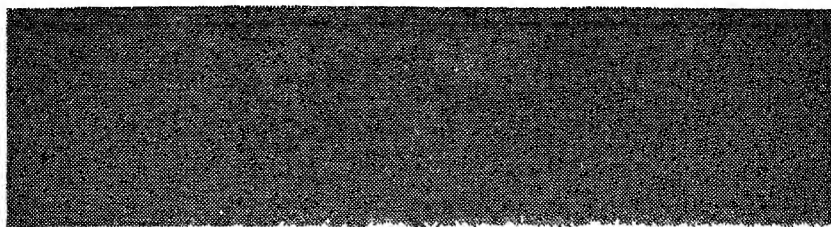
That is why you do not see your aircraft in the skies above you. They have been defeated and driven back to distant aerodromes, leaving you to fight your battles ALONE.

This pamphlet is a fair example of the ideal, which is neither to sermonise nor to bribe, nor to give startling news, but to work back from the known to the unknown. The Italians knew that their aircraft appeared seldom; they knew that in the last nine months R.A.F. bombers had done great damage to aerodrome buildings and workshops; and they knew that the Hurricanes had been flying across their lines since January. What they did not know were the figures of their own losses, which they tended to believe after a series of recognisable facts.

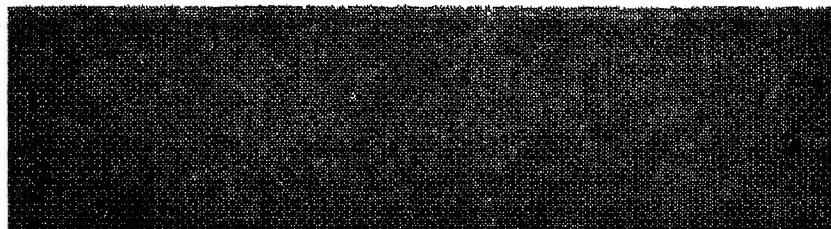
For the actual offensive, which was to begin on 15 March with all the artillery and aircraft in the Sudan at its back and over it and the two Divisions from India scaling the hills ahead, we prepared two simple documents which anybody could understand, however violent the weight of steel and high explosive hurtling round his head.

The first was a small replica of the Ethiopian flag, a rich red, yellow and green, with the Lion of Judah in the middle and under it the inscription, "The Lion of Judah has Conquered." On the back of this, which was uncoloured, was the Emperor's seal and the motto "Fight for your own King and your own Flag" in both Amharic and Tigrinya.

The second was to be dropped later, when the first had been absorbed. It was a replica of the Ethiopian flag four times the size of the first and the same size as *Banderachin*. On the reverse was the oval portrait of the Emperor in regalia



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Pamphlet in the form of the Ethiopian flag.

that we were now using regularly with *Banderachin*; underneath the portrait, the inscription

O my King Haile Sellassie
I am ready to fight and die for you;
I wish to be a free man!

We had found bodies outside our wire, shot in attempts by Italian patrols to cut their way through, which had in their pockets copies of our pamphlets although it was an offence still (punishable with seven days C.B., we were told) to carry our publications. It seemed reasonable that any man carrying a picture of the Emperor in his pocket with the new inscription, even if he did not at once desert, would have some moral compunction in resisting us and would bide his time to come over to us.

Records were cut by Richard Dimbleby in our garden at Khartoum for the loudspeaker equipment which was going off to Keren—half a dozen sides of a speech by Sirak in Amharic and the other half-dozen by Shallaka Kassa in Tigrinya. Like his written words, the little, asthmatic voice of Sirak came over on the gramophone clear as a bell.

The loudspeaker went up to Keren, where first Buckwell and later Oliver Baldwin were to handle it.

On 15 March over one hundred British guns opened upon the Keren positions and plumed them with smoke. All the bombers that we had drooled overhead, and in their effortless way, like spiders diving on their invisible threads, the bombs dropped in their thousands on Keren and the railway and the road. Those who were there say that it was a terribly hot and oppressive day, when the gunners drooped near their pieces and the infantry after waiting for hours in the sun behind the bushes for the order to go forward moved like lifeless machines when the moment came. It was as if the conductor Nature had been anticipated by her human orchestra with baton poised, and while we made the petty noises of battle below chose her own hour to bring real thunder on our heads.

Next morning the wire arrived at Headquarters in

Khartoum. A battalion of the West Yorkshire Regiment had carried Dologorodoc, the fort immediately to the south of the Keren gorge. Throughout the day they maintained this breach in the enemy line, and were supported by the rest of the 29th Indian Infantry Brigade.

The loudspeaker unit, used by our army for the first time in this war, was given a place to their right rear in the valley, and went into action at night. Kassa made a fluent personal appeal to the troops opposite. The personnel withdrew after midnight, leaving the equipment in a native hut in no-man's-land, which was later labelled BROADCASTING HOUSE. They played some delightful Italian records, such as "Peace, Peace, My God!" and "Your Little Hands are Frozen!" but these did not appeal to the British artillery behind them, who asked them to shut up.

On the first night, Buckwell, Oliver, Kassa and the rest were woken before dawn by an Amhara patrol from the enemy lines. They had deserted to the loudspeaker; so it had worked. Altogether sixty deserters came in that morning. For the first time during the campaign men were coming away from the other side during a set battle, rather than before or after it. This was a remarkable development among the Amhara, who, in general, become so excited at the sound of gunfire that they can listen to no other voice.

I flew to Burye in Gojjam to get the Emperor to draft four decrees founded on the fall of Keren: one for Wollo, the province to the east of the Blue Nile; another for Wallega, the Galla province to the south; a third for Shoa and Addis Ababa; a fourth for Tigre. We had to move quickly because we had no aircraft for distribution in the Ethiopian interior, except for transport to Burye. Everything else was concentrated on Keren. I would have to rely solely on mule and horse transport.

Fortunately for our readers on the high plateau, Keren did not fall immediately. The Kaid paused a little, preparing the final blow for which he would use the rest of the 5th Indian Division up the Keren gorge itself. The enemy threw one after the other his best battalions at Dologorodoc, where Yorkshire aided by lightning interventions of our air

and artillery was playing stonewall as Yorkshire had never done in peace-time.

The time had once more come to appeal to reason. North and south and east of Dologorodoc the R.A.F. had scattered our coloured symbols in the biggest aerial paper-chase of the campaign. In one week half a million flags had been dropped on a front less than ten miles long. Dologorodoc was now the point, for Italians as well as Amhara and Eritreans. All had suffered there.

To the Italians we said:

Before you stands the mountain Dologorodoc, which has broken your best troops. Here the Granatieri di Savoia, the Alpini Battalion, the Tipo Battalion and the famous 4th Eritrean Battalion have all met disaster. Other battalions from Shoa and Gondar and Eritrea have shattered themselves trying to recapture it. Your tanks too have failed.

How long are you going to be driven to the slaughter to support the vanity of your Duce Mussolini, who has ruined Italy, and to lay your country under the heel of the German invader? How long are you going to risk the security of your wives and children in Addis Ababa, which is indefensible, while you throw yourselves at these rocks, which are impregnable?

Italians!

You are cut off from all foreign aid. Your munitions are finite, ours infinite, your artillery is inferior and your aircraft are destroyed.

In Keren you are defending a fort with one wall only. The other walls in Harrar, Gojjam and Sidamo are down. Even in that single wall we have made the breach at Dologorodoc.

Italians!

How long are you going to die for nothing? How long are you going to obey orders from a corrupt Fascist leadership which ruthlessly sacrifices in an ill-armed and hopeless struggle the lives not only of yourselves and your best Colonial troops, but of all those whom you love?

On the back we had a rather different message for the Amhara and the Eritreans, who, from the latest deserter information, were growing restive.

Soldiers under the orders of the Italians at Keren!

The Italians are driving you to your destruction in their desperate attacks on this mountain in front of you.

They have already driven to disaster here the Granatieri di Savoia, the Alpini, the Battalion Tipo, the famous Quarto Battaglione Eritreo with its noble Medal of Gold. Also battalions of Askaris from Gondar and Shoa have been broken here, and the Italians' tanks.

You yourselves have seen how terrible is the English aviation and artillery and how feeble the Italian. The Italians are also running out of munitions because they can get no more by the sea-road, while we can get unlimited supplies not only from England but from our new great ally America.

The time therefore has come for you to say NO; to refuse further orders from the Italians to go and die for them *without victory or burial*. The time has come for you to fight for your own King and your own Flag, because *people without a flag have no life at all*.

Soldiers!

To every man who comes to us we give a friendly reception. For those Shumbashis, Blukbashis and Mumtazes (W.O.s and N.C.O.s) who bring in their units there will be special honour and promotion. It is best to come in groups, so that you can fight your way through the Italians. Carry your pamphlets high so that you will be understood as friends.

The deserter flood increased. From the other side came more and more reports not only of insubordination among the Amhara—that was to have been expected—but of disobedience of the long-service Eritrean N.C.O.s who had always been Italy's most faithful soldiers. To these we made a last appeal, under the Royal Arms of the United Kingdom:

Eritreans at Keren!

Listen!

We the English Government address you as one warrior does another.

The Italians have now ruled you for fifty years. They have always put you in the front line of battle.

They have filled your country with beautiful roads—to march you to your destruction. They have enriched your

country with cities—to push you, Eritreans, out into the countryside and force you to become simple Askaris. It has always been you who have had to go in front—but they have never made you officers or trusted you with big commands as we have trusted the Sudanese. Though you belong to a race as noble as any in the world, you have not even a flag of your own to fight for.

Now for the first time in your history you are facing total defeat. The Italians cannot at the same time hold Keren and Harrar against our superior arms and officers.

ERITREANS!

You deserve to have A FLAG! You deserve to have the right to become OFFICERS! You deserve to fight with BETTER WEAPONS than those that the Italians give you!

We offer you all of these if you abandon the defeated Italians now. We will honour especially those Eritrean N.C.O.s and men who come over in complete units.

This is the honourable life for the Eritrean :

to have the guts to call his people a Nation ;

to cease to be the slave of the Italian ;

to command battalions ;

to drive tanks ;

to pilot aircraft ;

instead of advancing for ever before the Italian boot and the Italian machine-gun.

How long are you going to obey them humbly and fight for them without getting the reward that you deserve?

The Italians were obviously anxious about the temper of their native troops. We therefore made no direct reference to breaking morale, but asked them suggestively what would happen to their families in Asmara and Addis Ababa when their defeated native battalions turned to loot. We could go no farther, for we had strict instructions from Middle East to make no reference whatever to a “massacre of the civilian population,” or to “revenge”; and we were not even allowed to publish in our propaganda photographs of Italian atrocities after I had given currency to one snapshot (taken from an Italian officer’s wallet) of six Ethiopians swinging on a gibbet. We had captioned it “Italian civilisation elevates the Ethiopians.”

Who can deny that the English are gentlemen? Who can say that we were typical members of the race?

But we had joined with the air force, and the guns, and our magnificent infantry at Keren to do our work. When we captured Frusci's situation reports we found that at this period desertions had reduced many of his units to thirty per cent. of their normal strength. With an optimism typically inane Frusci added, "Most of them will return to us."

On 25 March the Kaid sent his last free Brigade (the 9th) of the 5th Division up the Keren gorge, supported on the right by the West Yorkshires from Dologorodoc and the rest of the 10th Brigade. They smashed up the Bersaglieri battalion of the Savoy Grenadiers and established themselves astride and beyond the road-block, which our engineers blew up under determined enemy shellfire. From that moment Keren was finished. Our tanks entered the town on 27 March.

Forty battalions, the cream of the Italian colonial army, dispersed and were never seen again. Whole Brigade staffs were captured at the roadside, saying that their troops had walked home. Other Italian officers had hastened to Asmara to draw and embezzle their men's pay. A fitful resistance was put up at Ad Teclesan, superb position, by three fresh battalions who were soon overrun; and Asmara was ours.

In the twisted thread of these dramatic events, which brought ruin on an incipient Empire, it is utterly impossible to disentangle the casualties of aircraft, artillery, infantry, command, and propaganda. Though 6,000 deserters had come to our lines before the fall of Keren and a far greater number had coincided with our printed instructions and had gone home, though even many came to us waving pamphlets as a passport, I could not say that this was the work of propaganda alone. When I think of the many brave men who died for our cause on the dry peaks of Keren and of the incalculably greater effort made by the individual soldier in the line, all that I can say is that with a minute organisation we did our utmost and proved that propaganda is the arm of

co-operation that we had claimed it to be. We could not have taken Keren alone. The Indian Divisions could very well have taken Keren alone. All that we did was to abbreviate the battle, save the lives of our men, and so rub home the lessons on the Askari that they did not care to fight again.

The Emperor's letters on Keren were now dispersed throughout Ethiopia, and we wrote a special pamphlet which was dropped on Asmara and Adowa, Gondar and Makalle, Debra Tabor, Dessie and Debra Markos; and along all the communications uniting these centres. The Italians were not telling the disaster of Keren to the countryside, so we wrote for the flight of Free French aircraft who served us to the tune of 30,000 pamphlets per plane:

Ethiopian Lion

British Royal Arms

The English Army under General Platt has captured Keren and completely defeated the Italian Army in Eritrea.

The Italians had turned the mountains into strong defences, but these did not save them from defeat.

The bodyguard of Cæsar's representative the Granatieri di Savoia are broken and thus the door of Asmara is opened.

The English Army has secured the necessary victory in Eritrea and Ethiopia. The Italian Empire is completely destroyed.

Ethiopians! You are free from slavery ; as from this day you will live without fear under your own King and your own Flag.

You should give thanks to God.

Sirak said that this was the best pamphlet that we had done. Wingate in Gojjam was furious about it. He thought that instead of inciting the patriots to more strenuous efforts it encouraged them to feasting and song. It was not of course intended to win the patriots, but a very large number of sinners to deathbed repentance.

Chapter XIX

NIGHT BATTLE

WHEN we arrived on the aerodrome at Burye, an upland down, and drove in the captured Fiat up to the fort on the windy hill, there was Perry leaning on a shooting-stick and needing a haircut. Andrew explained that the Propaganda Unit had been turned on to the preparation of a new airfield for fighter planes the other side of the hill; we were looking forward to a long campaign; that was how the Gojjam battles were fought, hand to mouth, every spare officer and man chucked into a pool and picked out for the next most important job. The Press was installed in the fort and was clicking over, candle-lit; our Mohammedan printer was drunk every day but got his work done; quite like Fleet Street Perry had turned out some lovely little handbills, small enough to fold up and conceal in the ear, about the fall of Dangila and Burye. "The Ethiopian lion cub ate the vulture and passed belching" was the first line of one of his Amharic poems, and there was some very subtle stuff about red and white millet, meaning Ethiopians and Italians, much appreciated by the agricultural population for whom Perry was producing.

Burye on the whole had been saved from the looting generally associated with a patriot occupation. We had found that the only thing necessary to save abandoned enemy stores (mostly tinned tunny and preventives) was to get in first and place guards. The Ethiopians did not loot or wantonly destroy once they saw a semblance of order. All that they stripped here were the cloth hangings of the Italian officers' quarters in the filthy fort and the fabric of a Wellesley bomber which had forced-landed on the aerodrome. They had been short of clothing for years (that was why they looked so dirty) and they were ready to make themselves shirts out of anything. But at Dangila they had played hell with every Italian object that they found: par-

ticularly glass windows, screens and dials of cars, valves of wireless sets, hospital microscopes.

Next morning we took mules and went over to the Emperor's camp where bush grew around a rill in the harvested plain. The little man had come into Burye on a mule a few days back and there had been a colossal boasting ceremony attended by Nagash and thousands in front of him, when one of the Dedjasmatch's leading Fitoraris had jumped ecstatically on an Italian flag. It was odd to see my friend Lorenzo slightly simian in a beard. He led us to the presence, where a scene reminiscent of the Houyhnhnms in *Gulliver's Travels* awaited us.

The Emperor was seated under a canopy on a platform of turf, interviewing a full score of mules. The mules were attended by a few Ethiopians, whom they seemed to have fully in hand. A leading muleteer was falsely informing the Emperor that each of these animals was worth 60 Maria Theresa thalers (about £5 10s.).

He saw the humour of this situation, and beckoned us to a seat above the mules. I smiled to myself. It was the old Haile Sellassie, running every detail of the State's activities because the competent people with him were few.

Sixty dollars, he said, was very high price for a mule, and they were dismissed. We turned to the subject of Ras Hailu, now with the Italians in Debra Markos.

The old Ras, an enemy of the Emperor's from the beginning, was nevertheless receiving his letters; and from the beginning also it had been assumed that he desired the independence of Ethiopia and would abandon the Italians when the chance came. The withdrawal of Natale's force from Burye, however, and their shaky morale, had put a lot of power into Hailu's hands. He, who had always looked to his own interests in Gojjam foremost, was not the man to abandon anybody, Italian, British or Emperor, if he could wring a few concessions from their weakness. Moreover, he had an enormous amount of property in Debra Markos and eastern Gojjam, and if he were not there to protect it with his Italian-armed Bande it would be pillaged by the patriots when the Italians were swept out of Gojjam. He had no

fear of personal suffering at the hands of the Emperor, who had treated him kindly when he was his prisoner in Addis Ababa and whom he knew to be in principle and practice humane. Ras Hailu was never deceived by the pamphlets bearing the Emperor's seal forged in Addis Ababa on the Viceroy's instructions, which pretended that such as he would not be pardoned by Haile Sellassie. He had moreover prepared a very special postern gate of his own in Lij Belai Zelleka, the patriot leader of eastern Gojjam who for all his long elegant face and trim pointed beard was a country gentleman of no importance, and who therefore was not disinclined to accept the suggestion that he should marry into Hailu's royal family. This same Lij Belai, styling himself the "Avenger of the Blood of Ethiopia," had written Hailu a powerful letter about his unpatriotic behaviour in December, when the prince returned to Gojjam.¹ That had become the basis of a long negotiation now reaching a conclusion in which the patriotic motive had been a little blurred by the personal. Anyway, Lij Belai was safe. And finally, the old Gojjami, believing neither Italian propaganda nor our own, felt that the war and the fate of Ethiopia and above all of Hailu's possession Gojjam would be decided in Europe; how could he tell which way? It was safest then for him to keep in with both sides, which meant that he would remain a little listless with one side, protect its retreat, save his property, and then come with a cool, gracious smile over to the other side, rhythmically but unenthusiastically waving the Ethiopian flag.

Noblesse oblige ; Gojjam, c'est moi.

That was how the Emperor summed up Hailu. He had already given up hope of winning him as he was winning the two other great lords of the north, Ras Seyyum in the Tigre and Dedjasmach Ayelu Birru of Gondar.

To both of these now that their Empire was fraying at the edges the Italians, inspired by General Nasi in Gondar, their political expert, were applying the same technique.

An Italian manifesto had come into our hands from the Gondar area showing that Nasi himself on 17 February,

¹ Appendix E.

before the Ethiopian notables of the town, had proclaimed Ayelu Birru "Governor of Gondar." Ayelu was the hereditary lord of the Semien mountains to the north of Gondar, and in association with Ras Imru had put up a fine resistance to the Italians at the battle of the Shire in March 1936. Later he had submitted and had become one of the Viceroy's grantees; but we knew him to be our friend, and even at this moment he was arranging with Ringrose to escape from Gondar and join him. Ayelu had early received our pamphlets in Gondar through a woman in the market, who carried them under her skirt.

Abba Qirqos, too, had written to me before I left Khar-toum to give the latest news about Ras Seyyum. Seyyum, son of Mangasha, son of the Emperor John who was slain by the Dervishes at Gallabat and had helped Napier against Theodore, was a nice little chocolate Henry VIII, with the features and the adiposity of that monarch's later years and the good humour and gentlemanliness of his youth. Under the Italian regime—to which he submitted in 1936 when he heard that the Emperor had left the country—Seyyum came second to Hailu in the order of precedence. But he was not so starkly ambitious, sinister, selfish and opportunist as Hailu. He did not have his grand basalt poise. Though his grandfather had been Emperor and he himself was a Tigrean, not an Amhara, he was more an Ethiopian than Hailu could ever be. He wanted to see the Flag and independence again. He had had an unavoidable raw deal at the beginning of the Ethiopian War in 1935, for the Emperor's strategy obliged him to withdraw from the whole of his province, including Adowa and Axum, and to continue the fight with only 2,000 men because the rest, like Vichy French, preferred to stay at home with their wives and children. The Viceroy liked Seyyum best of all Ethiopians, and thought him (from his peculiar Italian point of view) the straightest. Seyyum therefore had been sent back to Tigre from Addis Ababa, as Hailu had been sent to Gojjam, with the rank of *Misfin* or Prince and the title-deeds of his old province. He had also been issued with 3,000 rifles; and his secretary, an old friend of mine, Blatta Kidane Mariam,

had written to Abba Qirqos in Wolkait that Seyyum would come over when we wished and that he was even now seeing Italian rifles into patriot hands.

So Italy was shoring up her East African defences by an application of the Bande system on the grand scale. Whereas she had until now armed the small chiefs round her forts, now she was trying to create a gigantic ring of great chiefs round her last centres of resistance, Addis Ababa and Dessie. Hailu, Seyyum and Ayelu Birru were all of them final desperate efforts to play upon Ethiopian particularism—that “tribalism” of Ethiopia which had been so important a theme in Italian propaganda against Ethiopia, had convinced so many of us, and was now going to let Italy rudely down. None of these great lords was in the end going to co-operate; and the only one who appeared to do so for a time was Hailu, who wanted to save his crops and money in Gojjam and the profitable cinema which he had built in the new native quarter at Addis Ababa.

I got a letter from the Emperor for Seyyum, whom he too liked.¹ We decided to launch a direct propaganda attack on Hailu, to whom hitherto it had been considered politic not to refer.

Hailu was now up to one of his most elaborate games of double bluff. He was telling the eastern Gojjamis, over whom patriot or non-patriot he shed the gilded influence of his birth, that the Italians knew nothing about it; but he had fixed it all up with the English; and Gojjam was going to remain free and manage its own affairs (i.e. improve Hailu's) if only everybody would obey his orders (i.e. Italy's).

So the Emperor went for the old rascal.

“Those Ethiopians,” he wrote, “instruments of the Italians, who did not have pity or compassion on you at the time of your anxieties and trials, have chosen the moment when I have come back and when the day of your unity and peace and freedom has dawned, to come in your midst as jackals to deprive you of these blessings.

“Do not forget the wrongs done to you. Ras Hailu is teaching you that he will never let you see the face of a

¹ And whose consequent policy is described in Appendix I.

European and that he has an understanding with the English. But you deceive yourselves if you forget that Ras Hailu is merely the telephone line and that the speakers at the other end are the Italians. Was it not only in my time that Ras Hailu was allowed to rule in Gojjam? After the Italians came, did they not fool him by keeping him in Addis Ababa as a prisoner at large?

"Have a care then that you do not fall into the trap of the Italians who keep Hailu as a lure in front of them and spread behind him their net of mischief. It is a considered plan of the Italians to make us fight among ourselves. Because their armies have been defeated everywhere, in Libya and Albania, Eritrea and Ethiopia, they have lost their heads and said to themselves 'As we are to be destroyed, let these people be destroyed.'

"People of Gojjam, be united! Remember the proverb that I have told you before: it is the unity of many weak threads that snares the lion."

The Emperor then gave Perry and me a water-bottle of the best *tej* and a cheque to buy him some good English saddles for his entry into Addis Ababa and greatcoats for his personal guard.

We rode back across the plain, between flowering shrubs, and past the old wooden church in the eucalyptus near the aerodrome. Closeted behind the slate-pencil clusters, it was round and built of heavy chiselled beams, its doors deep and tightly locked and a little askew, painted here and there with a formal Lion of Judah and a St. George, big-eyed, spearing the dragon. In the dappled shade our mules fed beside punctured Italian petrol drums, and Perry and I lay on our backs chewing grass and working out the propaganda for Debra Markos.

Sultan and the twelve best of the Unit—all deserters from Kassala and Tessenei—were to go down from Burye to Debra Markos at once where Wingate demanded them. They were not so much to participate in action as to undertake an independent role. They would carry:

(1) some hundred new rag portraits of the Emperor recently completed in Cairo;

(2) pocket-size pamphlets on the Keren collapse, now promised, to be produced by Perry's press;

(3) paper flags of the two types already used in Keren.

Their orders were to pass the pamphlets into Debra Markos itself and distribute them from house to house. Propaganda and our successes had already opened the door to Debra Markos, from which about one hundred a day were coming over to our lines; though these last could best be drawn with dots. We could easily smuggle people in. Some of the coloured flags were to be scattered at night along the streets and paths of Debra Markos. The rest were to be thrown for a stretch of about six miles along the road south of Debra Markos by which the Italians, if we knew and pressed them rightly, would eventually withdraw to the Blue Nile. The cloth portraits were to be displayed from convenient trees, and so scattered that while the Italians in the armoured cars heading the retreat were taking down one of them, the next was out of view.

In the dark room at the fort without ceiling or floor and with rough stone walls, as the rain drummed down on the sheets of the roof and the young wireless operator came in next door from a fifteen-hour day and sat on a bench, rubbing his eyes, to an Italian canned meal by candlelight, Mohammed el Tom sobered up and printed the final broadsheet of the Gojjam field press. The clinking of the lever went on all night, but neither it nor the earth on which one lay, nor the tap of the rain nor the cough of the printer kept one awake in that racing mountain air.

By next noon Sultan and the others were off with the news of the impending disaster at Keren.

By nightfall a British N.C.O. had come into Burye with a gloomy tale from the south. The military operations around Debra Markos had begun in earnest and Wingate had taken a crucial decision. The enemy had sprung back from Debra Markos and had reoccupied Fort Emanuel in the rear of the two companies of the Frontier Battalion led by Hugh. Brown's No. 1 Intelligence and Operational Centre had been driven out. Clearly the enemy knew at last how weak we were, and had called some of our bluff. The

Emperor himself, with an untrained bodyguard of 200, was in danger.

Simultaneously Torelli counter-attacked from Bahrdar Giorghis against our rear.

It was only later that we knew more of the story. Nasi had flown from Gondar to Debra Markos in a cold rage and had publicly upbraided Natale for not standing on the Tamcha (Emanuel) as he had been ordered to do. Natale was replaced by Colonel Maraventano, commanding the Debra Markos brigade. Informers and the rank and file taken prisoner with the baggage train of the 2nd Ethiopians had convinced the Italians that our strength was exaggerated. Ras Hailu's own Bande had gone out in lorries to Emanuel and reoccupied it. The counter-attack from Bahrdar in the north may have been part of a plan to reopen Dangila and Burye; more probably it was intended to relieve the pressure on the nerves of Debra Markos. In any case, though carried out with five battalions and mountain artillery, it was beaten back by 200 Sudanese of No. 3 Company, the Frontier Battalion, and harried all the way back to Bahrdar by old Gila Giorghis' patriots.

Our position was nevertheless most perilous. All that stood between Emanuel and the Emperor were two-thirds of the shaken 2nd Ethiopian Battalion, and all that stood between the Emperor and No. 3 Company was nothing.

For Wingate, the only solution was to press Debra Markos. The 2nd Ethiopians were rapidly re-formed as a roadstop, with one platoon of the Frontier Battalion under young Creedon in front of them (he reoccupied Emanuel and was driven out again). The rest of the two companies of the Frontier Battalion, who had already lost their only regular officer, Harris, to an ugly wound during the road-chase, were to throw themselves into the assault on Debra Markos, where the enemy had over 10,000 men, excluding Hailu's 6,000 Bande. At Burye they had been 800 to 7,000; now they were 400 to 16,000. Fortunately there were many patriot *fannos* and plug-uglies assembling round Debra Markos to scare the Italians too.

A new tactic had to be thought out to meet the altered

situation. Wingate and Hugh had already entered the circle of the Debra Markos forts and reconnoitred from a bushy ridge the whole system—from Wanke Fort to Abima Fort, from the Camp of the Whites to the Citadel, from the Palace of Ras Hailu's Daughter to the town of Debra Markos. A Sudanese sergeant reconnoitred the position at Gult, two or three miles north of Debra Markos on the road to Burye, where over 2,000 Italian colonial troops on a long low line of hills held the outer door to Hailu's fastness. Wingate was for plunging straight into the middle of Debra Markos, but Hugh said that with his force he could not do it. They could fight their way in at night, but they would not escape the enemy cavalry in the morning. But he could go for Gult with a new technique. He camped on High Hill, a few miles north of Debra Markos.

For over a fortnight at the end of March 1941, a battle as original as that of Burye was fought between the two European powers. Darkest night alone was the scene chosen for contact by the aggressor, who were the English, numbering a dozen, and the Sudanese, 400 in all. On the other side, clustered in their camps, in trenches and behind stone sangars, lay the thousands of the brown enemy, not knowing whether they should fight for the Emperor, for Hailu, or for Italy, or indeed whom they *were* fighting for and against, for Italian propaganda and policy had made so many changes; therefore not fighting, but communicating their fear to over a thousand white Italians in their midst. The weapons of battle were the British Mills bomb, thrown accurately, against the Breda and Schwartzlos machine-gun and the 65·7 mm. mountain gun, fired high in alarm; the noiseless feet of the Sudanese, their silent tongues; the British or Sudanese officer and N.C.O. in front, sensing his way in the undergrowth, with right arm extended in warning behind him, to the enemy's trench; sum it up in a principle—unbroken discipline and unrivalled skill, uncanny silence until the last terrific explosions blew the guts out of the enemy at ten yards' range.

This was not bad work for Sudanese Arabs who, except for their N.C.O.s and native officers, had less than a year ago

been tending their camels or stealing other people's in Kordofan; and for British officers who, bar Hugh and his second-in-command, had known no regular service and had gathered from D.C.'s offices and the evening whisky on the verandahs of the Cotton Syndicate for a bit of military fun.

Every day an officer left High Hill Camp on close reconnaissance of one part or other of the enemy's positions. During the afternoon a platoon or more—from 50 to 100 men—went up with him to the cover nearest the enemy and waited for nightfall. The Italians facilitated these approach tactics by an absolute indifference to the importance of patrolling, long a speciality of the British Army. They never came out of their positions and at no time flushed our parties as they lined up for the attack. Well after dark the final approach would begin. The officer led, the men followed, signalling to each other by hand or whispers. In spite of the fact that they wore heavy leather sandal-boots and many had sores, they moved with little noise. Each carried rifle and bayonet and a couple of Mills bombs. Sometimes the enemy was suspicious and fired wildly in their direction; they were not allowed to reply nor, after the firing had ceased, to move for several minutes. Then they went on to the statutory dozen yards before the enemy's position, and fanning out threw their bombs when he was sleepest. There was a smart rush with the bayonet and the position was theirs. They waited to beat off a counter-attack before they withdrew. Common sense required that they should attack at the lowest moment of the night, between 12 and 3, and be back under cover before dawn. Within those fixed points they could vary their bowling, as their reports showed:

- 14 March: attack on Banda village on outskirts of Debra Markos; houses burned, enemy casualties.
- 18 March: enemy positions on Gulit attacked, road to Debra Markos mined, two enemy lorries blown up.
- 19 March: five platoons attack and carry Abima Fort near Debra Markos centre; withdrawal over open glacis at 4 a.m.; one British officer wounded.
- 21 March: Approach march on Gulit mistimed; action called off.

- 22 March: Enemy reported about to attack High Hill Camp; camp emptied; enemy find it empty and withdraw.
- 23 March: Enemy cavalry camp reconnoitred by the two Colonels; too near Bande villages; action abandoned.
- 24 March: Attack by entire force on four positions at Gulit; three carried; enemy fire with artillery, mortars and machine-guns throughout the night; one British officer wounded, three Sudanese troops killed by falling off a cliff, 11 wounded.
- 25/6 March: Rest in camp.
- 27 March: Camp changed to $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles from Gulit.
- 28 March: High ridge dominating Gulit from the south occupied; fire opened on Gulit, causing many casualties; no casualties to Frontier Battalion.
- 30 March: mortar fire opened at daylight on Gulit, 38 enemy killed; Azaj Kabada's patriots bomb Fort Wanke; road between Emanuel and Gulit mined.
- 31 March: bomb attack on Addis, principal Gulit position; one British officer killed; enemy abandon Emanuel, losing 2 lorries and 23 men killed.
- 1 April: Enemy abandon Gulit and withdraw on Debra Markos centre; first enemy troops withdraw from Debra Markos to the Blue Nile; Azaj Kabada's patriots bomb Abima Fort.
- 2 April: Further enemy withdrawals; mortar attack on Fort Makub near centre, followed by bomb attack and large fires; patrols forward.
- 3 April: Bomb attack on Palace of Ras Hailu's Daughter; machine-gun attack on colonial troops and Bande camped below Abima Fort; evacuation of Italian white troops reported complete.

Hugh had meanwhile despatched Johnson, one of his white Bimbashis, to join Lij Belai Zelleka and Thesiger on the road between Debra Markos and the Blue Nile, and to finish off the Italians.

And so on 3 April he went up to his usual reconnaissance of Debra Markos, and with his naked eyes saw the Ethiopian flag flying from the citadel. For all his selfishness, there was that basic nationalism in a great Ras like Hailu that

could not think of any other symbol to wave when the Italians had left him to Gojjam and his independence. He did not offer to surrender. He offered simply to negotiate, to play for time as calmly as he had done throughout the last fifty years; he was Hailu of Gojjam! It took a threat to bomb him with aircraft out of his palace and that actual attack with grenades on the palace of his absentee daughter, and a personal march by Hugh and Maxwell to the Citadel with sticks in their hands, and a lot of banging on doors and undignified waiting in rooms, before Hailu gave in. He received Hugh at last in the uniform of an Italian general, carrying all his decorations. Makonnen Desta, the young Harvard-trained cousin of Hailu who had been political and propaganda officer to the Frontier Battalion since it marched from Burye, kissed the Ras' hand and knees in fealty, addressed him as a higher being, massaged and softened the forthright phrases of Hugh. Such was the influence of the great men of blood in Ethiopia, even when they were as equivocally sited as Hailu was on 4 April. He asked for, and secured from Hugh, control of the public order of Debra Markos. First, there should be no looting of Hailu's hereditary goods.

Great rich Prince; dark plotting African; acquisitive aristocrat; mannered statue of black marble, tall, handsome and grim, the thin lips unmoved by a flicker of condescending humour; this was Hailu at one of his most distinguished moments—the man who had bartered his own people a score of years back into the armies of Italy to fight in Cyrenaica and Tripolitania and Somalia, and to recover their arms and training when they returned, in order to wrench Gojjam half away from the central Amhara power; he who had ten years ago connived at the escape of the imprisoned ex-Emperor Lij Yasu; and who had paid for his failure with the loss of Gojjam and of a hoarded wealth, including one thousand jewelled watches. At this hour he might lose Gojjam again. But he still stood upright and magnificent, he still thought of his property before his own security, he had not run away or thought for one moment of running away, and the people, even his enemies, still kissed the long

hands that he scarcely seemed to offer as he walked carelessly among them.

Hailu then said that he would submit to the Emperor.

On 6 April the French-Canadian Leblanc, formerly chief engineer of Renault's works in Paris and boss of 30,000 Communists, drove the Emperor up the road from Burye to Debra Markos in one of the Morris trucks that he had brought in from the Sudan. Twelve of these, belonging to the unused transport of the Frontier Battalion, had just made history. They had been driven from Roseires through Gubba; south of Belaya; up to the Matakal slope of the escarpment. Leblanc was the only white man working in the convoy; the rest were newly trained Sudanese drivers and mechanics. Chopping down the bush and the trees, breaking away the rocks with crowbars, with ropes to pull and their shining black bodies to push, these crews heaved the trucks each fifteen hundredweight up 3,000 feet of escarpment along a self-made track of one and a half miles in two and a half days. I doubt whether such work on a roadless rock gradient of worse than one in three has ever been accomplished. Leblanc and his Sudanese did it without breaking a spring. British lorries were there to bring the Emperor into Debra Markos.

Hailu sent out his scintillating Alfa Romeo, flying an Ethiopian flag, to carry the Emperor. It was rejected.

The flag that Hailu had run up the masthead of Debra Markos citadel was hauled down, and a cleaner Ethiopian flag was raised by the Emperor's hand.

Ras Hailu arrived twenty minutes' late for this ceremony. The Emperor waited for him and gave a curt acknowledgment as the tall figure in the jewelled black cloak got out of the Italian car and bowed low as a dancing master to his suzerain. There was an Imperial speech to the troops. Ras Hailu waited a few moments to see if he would be called. He detected the displeasure of the Emperor, bowed steeply again, turned back with a graven scowl on his face, and drove in his territorial glory away. The two were to be in no sense reconciled until they had crossed the Blue Nile into Shoa.

That night came the news that Addis Ababa had fallen to the armies of Lieut.-General Sir Alan Cunningham, and the Emperor and British officers drank to the health of the Ethiopian Empire.

Until the end of April Hailu of Gojjam was a problem. In the centre of Debra Markos was the Emperor, with a bodyguard of the 2nd Ethiopian Battalion and less than half the Frontier Battalion. In the outer forts were the patriot leaders such as Nagash and Hailu Bilau. But far the best equipped and most numerous troops were the 6,000 Bande of Hailu.

He had rendered the Italians a final service as we entered Debra Markos—as Hailu, I believe, would cynically befriend us until he had seen the last of us, if we gave him the chance. His negotiations with Lij Belai Zelleka had reached the point when the “venger of the blood of Ethiopia” stepped aside from the road to Addis Ababa that Maraventano’s column had to follow, and so enabled them to escape intact, except for the deserters that they shed, one thousand a day, going back to the Blue Nile. Only Johnson of the Frontier Battalion, with his twenty men, was able to ambush two armoured cars and nearly thirty lorries in a D.S.O. job.

Ethiopia is full of forgivenesses and collusions, pardons and policies difficult for the Englishman to understand. Unashamed, Lij Belai arrived a few days later at Debra Markos to see the Emperor. Wingate told him that if he came anywhere near the town he would be shot for treachery. The Emperor said that he must receive Lij Belai, and after a long argument he won the day on a compromise. Belai was coldly received outside the citadel, while Wingate stood round the throne with four machine-guns bracketed on Belai; Belai could then have no doubts of what Wingate, for one, thought about him. As for Hailu, I shall be surprised if he fulfils his part of the contract with the young *parvenu* who once fought well for Ethiopia but could not resist the lure of blood. When it was in Belai’s power to shorten the campaign he preferred to ennoble himself. He probably argued that the Italians were defeated already, that it was good to see them out of his country, and that his duty was done.

Not so the Frontier Battalion.

Mota was the one other fort in eastern Gojjam where the enemy remained. Here were between 400 and 500 survivors of his 69th Colonial Battalion, against whom Hugh now marched with one company across the 13,000-foot pass of the Chokey mountains. Once more the Sudanese plainsmen led the way, their feet festering and swollen with jigger sores, in cotton uniforms, with one blanket and one ground-sheet apiece, in biting cold and blizzard, in mountain sickness, on half rations, without a complaint. Arrived at Mota they joined No. 1 Intelligence and Operational Centre and began to mortar and machine-gun the fort. Wingate wirelessly for all, except one platoon, to return to assure the doubtful security of Debra Markos. Hugh marched his men away at night, so that the enemy should observe no change, and next morning dressed up his surviving Lieutenant as a Major and sent him to demand the surrender of Mota. After a little more fierce face, mortaring and Brenning from close range Mota threw up the sponge in the form of a Commissario who issued trembling on a white horse under a large white banner. Sixty Sudanese trooped leggily in, grinning, to disarm the entire garrison.

The Emperor's proclamation was read, and the 400 announced that they wished to join the Emperor's army.

That night Sergeant Burke, who had played full back for Australia, rushed into Hugh's room and asked him straight and clear, "Who has won this bloody war, sir, us or them?" "It looks like us," said Hugh sleepily. "That's just what it doesn't look like," answered Burke, and took him along to a large room where the Italian officers had made themselves comfortable for the night, each with his Ethiopian lady friend.

There in miniature we had the end of a hit-or-mistress Empire.

Chapter XX

ROAD'S END CAMP

MAURICE LUSH, Dan's brother-in-law, had been appointed Deputy Chief Political Officer, in effect Military Governor, of Ethiopia, and entered Addis Ababa with the conquering column of General Cunningham. He signalled Khartoum that he wanted me to do propaganda for his organisation there, and the Kaid released me for three weeks. Keren, Asmara, Massawa had fallen; there remained only Gondar and Amba Alagi on our front. I had sent Perry up to Chilga to deal with the first, and Oliver to Asmara for the second. There was no more offensive propaganda to do. I had to become a man of peace and policy, as gentle as a dove and as perspicacious as a light-house.

We flew up from Roseires over the reconquered land—Belaya, Debra Markos, the great Blue Nile divide, Shoa. A Brigadier and two Colonels were in the same plane. They did not seem enormously interested as we swung over Mount Entoto and Addis Ababa lay in its sprawling long-distance beauty among the millions of eucalyptus beneath, the copper domes suggesting wealth, the green plains and darker mountains beyond assuring defence and a comfortable life. But my senior companions had no comparisons to make with the past. A young officer in gloves met them with a car at the aerodrome: I sat forgotten with my friends the Sudanese clerks, eating their cheese and olives, for a full hour, looking round and trying to assimilate the new Addis, among the wreckage of Italian aircraft, spilled, unsalvaged boxes of Italian grenades and field altars.

It was a deception. When at last we got a car into the town I found that the structure of Addis had not changed with conquest. The tarmac on the old Akaki aerodrome, the mutilated hangars, the pretty officers' mess of the Regia Aeronautica with its engraved glass, and closer to the centre, the hollow beginnings of the *Citta Industriale* were all that

were basically new. We rode through the façade like a coach-and-four, and found the old Addis Ababa with new inhabitants, like coral after the builders are dead.

What had the Italians done? I have heard from the ignorant so much about Italy's effort to uplift the Abyssinian, and how inevitable now is a return to savagery, that I should say clearly what the Italians had done in Addis, the capital of their Empire:

(1) they had taken all the Ethiopians out of their old town and had replaced them with some 25,000 Italians; some of the Ethiopians had been compensated at a low rate, others could not draw their rents from the new occupiers, others had more frankly suffered confiscation;

(2) the old Ethiopian houses and the old Armenian shops had been painted in new colours to receive their new hosts; on every one, besides, there was a notice-board proclaiming what the owner did (the Ethiopians had not known how to advertise non-existent functions or the interchange of washing);

(3) the Duce, going so far in the study of charity as to examine the first page of Genesis, had said, "Let there be light"; therefore there was electric light, but no spare bulbs;

(4) the *Citta Industriale* had been begun one year before the war started and had therefore remained, a flotsam of unfinished offices awaiting in vain managers and clerks who would now have to be unsubsidised;

(5) a native town had been built some two miles out of the real Addis Ababa, so that the Ethiopian should not pollute the pure, fair Italian type by his proximity; the most notable furniture of this reservation were a mosque (unfinished) and a series of loudspeakers attached to the central wireless station for the daily diffusion of propaganda;

(6) the Ethiopian schools and hospitals, established by the Emperor Haile Sellassie and by favoured foreigners in his reign, had been taken from the Ethiopians and handed over to the Italians; the Emperor's

model prison had been taken over by European offenders and the older prisons for Ethiopians were filthier under the Italians than under the indigenous regime;

(7) a colour bar was still maintained everywhere, in the hotels, cinemas, restaurants and bars;

(8) the only new building of any size in the town was a barracks of a hotel where the proprietor refused to issue his best wine until we threatened to get him expelled, and two prostitutes began a short career of giving British officers syphilis;

(9) the Ethiopians went about as if nothing mattered, and least of all the 25,000 surviving Italians;

(10) a West African guard presented arms to officers entering their private brothel.

Last of all, I visited my old house. The interior was unrecognisable. The furniture was exquisitely chosen, the glass most expensive, the pictures rare; and without, the garden acres were multiplied. This part of the swag had fallen to the Podesta, the Mayor of Addis Ababa, whose job was one of the plums of the local Fascist Party. . . . When later we examined the accounts of the Addis Ababa municipality we found a monthly deficit of 1,000,000 lire, supplied by the unfortunate *demos* who remained in Italy. No wonder the Empire was Fascist. That deficit covered the inefficient and incontinuous water supply; the unfinished Industrial City; fire engines that would no longer travel in reverse; electric power that failed for two hours in every twenty-four; and the Podesta's house and garden.

Italians that one talked to were cynical, up to a point. But they were sure that they had been beaten by superior numbers and equipment; they whose countryman was Machiavelli asked me how we English, who prided ourselves on our fairness, could stoop so low as to use a native potentate against fellow whites; the women of their middle classes began to weep when they had to leave Addis for a camp at Diredawa, and could not understand when Londoners were unsympathetic. Among them there was a fierce hatred of Teruzzi, the Minister for Italian East Africa, the corruptionist who had his money in every transport and nearly every

commercial enterprise. No better propaganda was done for Britain in the war against Italy than the bitter radio speech of Teruzzi to his dwindled estates in May 1941. "No one has ever made more of an Empire in five short years than we," said Teruzzi. "OUT of, you mean," said the Italians of Addis Ababa.

There was, of course, an apparatus to persuade the Ethiopians that they also were considered. At my first office, that of the former *Affari Politici*, there was a shop window full of the sweets handed in cheap Cellophane by the Italians to good peaceful Abyssinians. It contained silver crowns, velvet cloaks, swords with false and shaky mother-of-pearl handles, ribbons, tin plaques made to look like very big medals which were presented for "Commerce, Agriculture and Industry"; and scrolls to nominate Ethiopians upon a dotted line to any of the old ranks of the Solomonian Empire. In a dusty cupboard nearby lay the record of the confiscations of Ethiopian property made during the years 1936-7, and the long files of claims made by the Ethiopian survivors and heirs during the conciliatory regime of Aosta. They were very thick files. I found none completed. In *Affari Politici* the artificial glittered, the substantial lay forgotten in the dark.

But the best picture of the Italian Empire was gained from a document written by Consul-General Bonacorsi, head of the Fascist Militia, in which he attacked the policy of Aosta on the grounds that it was too considerate of the Ethiopian native, too clement to rebels. He then developed his economic criticism of the Italian Imperial structure.

"The people," wrote Bonacorsi, "were held at arms' length and private enterprise was never encouraged. The contrary, in fact. Thousands of difficulties were put in the way of honest workers by the cumbersome bureaucratic administrative authorities. People returning home from the Empire spoke only of their profound disillusionment. Government contractors sought only to make money and the workers were made to live in conditions often worse than those of the natives. As far as agriculture was concerned, with very few exceptions, little or no progress was made.

. . . Everything was a State concession financed by the State. The Italian wishing to develop privately a small piece of land found that he had a thousand bureaucratic hedges to jump. . . .

"Throughout the Empire the fortunate have been those contractors who have worked exclusively for the State. Prices varying between one million and two million lire (£10,000 to £20,000), and sometimes more, have been paid for one kilometre of road, with the result that people who came out to Africa without a cent have gone home multi-millionaires (cf. Astaldi, Leoni and the rest).

"The monopolies created and protected by the State have spread their tentacles to every sphere of activity. CONIEL had the complete monopoly of all electric and hydraulic enterprise. The cost of electricity was what it was owing to lack of competition. More could have been done to develop the enormous potential power and many private companies would have undertaken the work without asking for help from the State. CIAO had the complete monopoly of hotels. Prices were very high and food and accommodation very indifferent. At Assab, for instance, when a steamer arrived it was a common sight to see women and children sleeping in the open on account of the complete inadequacy of the CIAO hotel. . . . Private individuals were only too ready to develop hotels of all kinds everywhere, but the necessary permits were always refused because everything was in the hands of Baron FASSINA. AMAO had the complete monopoly of all in the mineral line. For this reason no research could be made and no discovery profited by. The government officials in charge of this were devoid of any initiative and lovers of a quiet life. One would only have to examine the statistics of mineral production prior to the conquest and compare the cost of production then and now to see that very little has been accomplished in this line. CITAO had the monopoly of all transport, both civil and military, with the result that costs were higher than before and the service less efficient, with grave prejudice to the economic life of the country. CITAO had a top-heavy and clumsy bureaucratic structure whose officials enjoyed astronomic salaries. It

was much to be doubted if, in the eventuality of war, it could in any way meet military needs. Cotton was developed by various monopolistic companies. In the *Oltre Giuba* district the company was headed by a certain MARELLO DIAZ, who grew rich to the extent of millions at the expense of the small grower without running a single risk himself. The cost of the seed from the company, the price paid to the native for picking, packing and despatching, interest on capital invested, etc., brought the cost to between seven and eight lire per kilo. The sale price to the State was about twenty-eight lire per kilo, the difference being pocketed by the people in control of these monopolistic companies.

"Coffee was exploited in the same way with the single exception of the Province of Galla-Sidama, where H. E. GAZZERA, an honest and capable man, managed to put a stop to family favouritism and selfish speculation. Innumerable other monopolies existed—salt, skins, cement, sugar, etc. Private enterprise and initiative found no outlet and work could only be done in the name of the State with the State's money to enrich that group of fortunate people who had control of the State's monopolies.

"One TACCHINI, resident in Addis Ababa, at a time when the export of hides to Italy was forbidden, managed somehow to obtain a licence for a few thousand quintals and reaped a rich reward.

"The Monopoly has always been a harmful institution, but one which has had a temporary use to protect the interests and regulate the activities of national institutions whose structure already exists and is sound. But to import monopolies into Africa where everything had to start from scratch was pure folly. The result has been to strangle honest enterprise and to create a new class of privileged beings whose only function was to speculate for themselves in the name of the State. With such people it was completely impossible to colonise and develop the territory conquered as they invariably placed their own selfish interests before all else."

An ardent Fascist signed these words a month before England and Italy were at war.

The stucco in the Imperial structure began in the basement. A corrupt oligarchy divided into warring departments and "companies" expected its cut from every enterprise. Our Italian propaganda against this system had not exaggerated its enormities. The symbol of the Five Years' Empire should have been not an upright Fasces but a down-right Racket.

At the Palace, not yet occupied by the Emperor, I found a familiar round figure in familiar clothes. It was Ato Tasfai Tegeugne, waiting, in the plus fours that he wore in 1935. Dear old Tasfai, Director of the Foreign Office then—old in imagination only, for in spite of his obesity and his rotund but dignified jocularity, he was still under forty. The plus fours had been lying in store for our return, he said: like his Ford, for which he wanted a permit to buy tyres. What a stroke from the past was Tasfai; almost the last Ethiopian that I had seen in the disaster, and suddenly we both remembered the words, "Don't worry, Ato Tasfai, we will return, this is not the end." He wore, and wished to circulate in, the material evidence that he had not despaired. But Tasfai had been tested. Arrested in 1937 after the attempt on Graziani, he had been carried to a Mediterranean island for three years' confinement. In his absence the Italians stole all his valuables, including his foreign decorations—*les salauds*. Then Aosta had given him a job; in 1939-40 the former Director of Foreign Affairs ran an agency for messenger-boys and house-boys in the Native Town. Tasfai, whom Colson the Emperor's principal adviser had described to me as the most efficient Ethiopian that he knew, took it all as a rather feeble joke. As he smiled, one saw that he had no front teeth. "Your blockade," said Tasfai, "was remarkable. Unlike my face, there were no gaps in it. No false teeth, and no Ford tyres!"

Tasfai had no job, so I snatched him for propaganda.

I also collected young Lij Yilma Diressa, who had served before in the Ethiopian Foreign Office as a contemporary and friend of Sirak Herrouy, and had studied at the London School of Economics. Lij Yilma was a pure Galla of the

ruling house of Wallega and in his period of Mediterranean exile he had translated Wells' *Outline of History* into Amharic. His cousin Dedjasmatch Hapte Mariam of Wallega had submitted to the Italians and been poisoned by them; his father Blatta Diressa had withdrawn to the Sudan, where he now netted a considerable sum in the brewing of *tej*, the Abyssinian mead.

Lieut. MacSweeney, an active young Irish signal officer, had already engaged an Italian jazz band to play on the defective loudspeaker system of Addis Ababa. The 1-kilowatt station was not working, but he tickled up the city on 40 watts. He joined our company.

His first job was to clear up the loudspeakers. The wires running from the station to the speakers throughout the town were of inferior material which rotted in the rains. The Irishman mended and superintended them. Next he repaired the station itself, which had been put out of action rather feebly by its Italian staff; and he seized all the spare valves in Addis Ababa. He thus switched the station back to 1 kilowatt within a week. We gathered the old Amharic and Galla announcers of the Italian regime, and told the four Italian engineers that this was a public service and they would have to work it on pain of severe punishment. A Jew from Milan who did not worry whether other Italians loved him or not instituted an Italian programme. Features in this at times—for example, the fall of Dessie—distressed the Italian staff. Leonardo, the small chief engineer, would then rush into my office with arms outspread as if he would be crucified, and say, "Kill me, but I cannot go on." Consideration tempered with severity kept this foreign team working at its inefficient best. They could not know what frightful things about Italy the Ethiopian announcers were launching into the microphone. I remember one occasion when Mussolini was being compared with the worst in the bestiary, and Leonardo was grinning through the glass window of the studio and clapping his hands because the sound was coming over fine. We explained that these programmes were simply framed in order to assure the security of the 30,000 of the Italian civil population. If the radio

system broke down, we told them, the Ethiopians in Addis Ababa would become an uncontrollable mob, and then some. At this the Italian engineers went white and worked much harder at the production of anti-Italian propaganda. An alternative treatment was to summon them to the office, look hurt, and complain of their black ingratitude, their unreadiness to repay their moral debt to Britain who had saved them from a horrible end by occupying Addis Ababa in the nick of time. They were simple souls who nodded their heads vigorously and were better for the next twenty-four hours. They worked better still when they had stolen some barbed wire and wound it round their living quarters.

There were crowds in the squares of Addis Ababa when the loudspeakers were working, and rhythmical clapping followed every pellucid phrase that now bubbled from the well of truth.

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We had three great problems to face.

One was the colour bar. It flourished still in Addis Ababa when I arrived, and was the first thing that we had to break. I have no doubt that this part of the Italian regime was the most offensive to the proud Shoan. Hairdressers refused to cut Ethiopian hair and barmen stuck up notices, "NO NATIVES SERVED HERE," by which they hoped to curry favour with South African troops. There were some incidents when the Emperor's men came into Addis Ababa. Finally we got an arrangement by which three bars in the town were reserved severally for British officers, N.C.O.s and men; all other places of public resort were open to everybody.

The second problem was Ethiopian property. One of the preconditions of the Emperor's re-entry was the security of the Italian population, which we had not guaranteed but they, through their Committee, repeatedly claimed. We were only too happy to accept their idea of *Security Zones* for their 30,000 civilians, and thereby to clear them from the old centre of Addis Ababa. It delighted me not to save Italian lives which were never in danger, but to use the Italians' own lively imagination to turn Addis Ababa once more into an Ethiopian town. The houses which they left

behind were Ethiopian property. For the time being they were guarded by a special police and Ethiopian claims to them were registered. The slowness of these processes, inevitable as it was, inevitably irritated the pronounced property sense of the Ethiopian and had to be continually explained by our organisation.

The third problem was the major, and what I found for the moment to be the insoluble problem of all Ethiopia. It was to present itself more sharply when the Emperor returned to Addis Ababa, but its ghostly outlines loomed even in April. Who was the ruler of Ethiopia? For whom were we speaking?

We had in our printed propaganda, which for the Ethiopians was more real than statements made in the House of Commons, made the following promises:

(1) We had promised, and we had allowed the Emperor to promise, the entire independence of Ethiopia in phrases considerably stronger than "His Majesty's Government would welcome the reappearance of an independent Ethiopian State";

(2) we had stated that the Emperor Haile Sellassie was the rightful ruler of Ethiopia and that we were supporting him with arms; we were also allowing him to issue Orders ("Awajes") to his people as an act of sovereignty; this meant more to the Ethiopian than the Parliamentary recognition of "the claim of the Emperor Haile Sellassie to the throne";

(3) we had allowed the Emperor to engage himself to his people in an official Awaj that the Government of Ethiopia would be modernised, that every man would have "his rights to hold" and that he, the Emperor, would for the betterment of Ethiopia seek the advice of friendly nations in the League, and particularly Great Britain.

I had often discussed with Ethiopians what these promises held for Ethiopia; their consensus was this:

(1) The Emperor was sovereign of an independent Ethiopia, understood by the people to be that territory included in the boundaries of 1935;

(2) the Emperor should choose his advisers in administrative, judicial, financial and military affairs, who would be responsible to him; and he should form his own Ministry;

(3) there should be British administrative officers throughout the provinces of Ethiopia who would advise the Emperor's provincial governors and whose advice on administrative matters would in fact be accepted because of their powers of report to the Emperor: and many Ethiopians went farther, saying that the British officers should run the provinces with Ethiopian governors merely as figureheads.

In fact, the Emperor found himself confronted with the structure of an Occupied Enemy Territory Administration, the normal creation of British military law in all conquered territory and the unavoidable safeguard of the communications of British troops. Attempts were made to modify the application of British legal theory in his favour, but the two prerogatives were bound at times to jar. Propaganda during this interim before the full restoration of Abyssinian independence was bound to be delicate.

Nothing, however, could take away from the feeling of the Ethiopians that after five years of doubt, confusion and suffering they were once more free men through their own exertions and the skill of British arms. Their happiness was clear in the forbearance amounting to nonchalance that they showed to a shrinking Italian population which had no chance of leaving Addis Ababa (because there was no shipping to take them anywhere) and therefore did their business in the centre of the town at midday and scuttled to their security zones in the evenings. Racial clashes were few, and were in nearly every case motivated by robbery. A radio campaign in Amharic from Rome fell on deaf ears; did not even stimulate resentment among the forty Ethiopians allowed by the Italians to have radio sets. The Ethiopians, unlike their late tyrants, were totally indisposed to kick men who were down or even to observe their horizontal situation. In this I found the best token that they knew that they were free and that vengeance was superfluous.

In this atmosphere we prepared the day of the Emperor's return.

He set out from Debra Markos at the end of April, with the 2nd Ethiopian and half the Frontier Battalion. The rest were at Bahrdar Giorghis, or had broken east after crossing the Blue Nile at Safartak to chase Maraventano's retreating column to Agibar, where they were to win a famous victory, taking over 7,000 prisoners and seven guns. Down the enormous gorge wound the Imperial host, escorted by the *arbenyach* of Gojjam into the feverish Blue Nile bottom, a day's march from the summit of the divide. Here Leblanc and fifteen of his Sudanese had built a new bridge at Safartak to replace the old pontoon destroyed by the Italians in their retreat. The Sudanese advance guard of the Lion of Judah did not fail him. In thirty-six hours, working without respite in the icy water of night, up to their chattering chins in the young Nile, these fifteen men hauled by main force old forty-gallon petrol drums and iron traverses from the wreckage downstream until they had built the pillars and cross-pieces of a bridge 200 yards long. Work in the middle where the Nile was five feet deep was particularly hard, but by careful swimming and balancing they got the drums into place. Then the Sudanese crossed over and in four days cleared or bridged two large demolitions in the opposite cliff left by Maraventano. They were not engineers; they were lorry drivers and machine-gunners, directed by an automobile expert; they were our own magnificent Sudanese troops, the frank-hearted blend of Arab and African, capable of performing all the tasks of war toughly and cheerfully if well led, of marching anywhere, any height and any how and beating the enemy at the other end, incomparably the finest fighting stock in Africa, ready for trials and sudden diversions intolerable to European infantry. These fifteen were the tip of a spearhead of a 1,000 who had blazed the track of an Emperor through twenty-three battalions of the enemy. After he had crossed the Blue Nile bridge laid by their art, and already awash in the turbulent promise of the great rains overspilling Lake Tana, and had climbed for a day up the

other bank of the chasm with Ras Kassa and Ras Hailu, the Emperor ordered for the Frontier Battalion a feast at Debra Libanos. There, in the old refectory of the monastery that had been pillaged and burned by the Italians in 1937 because it housed a deep Ethiopian nationalist tradition, the Mohammedan soldiers sat cross-legged on the rush floor and were served with food and drink by Christian monks. The Emperor and his cousin Kassa prayed beside the dank graves of Kassa's murdered sons, victims of Graziani, Aberra and Wond Wossen, whom even the White Russian Konovaloff, most critical of the Ethiopians, had described as *noble princes*.

In Addis Ababa they were putting up shaven eucalyptus poles painted green, yellow and red along a road that I remembered. It came down Entoto past the Little Palace, and it was the road by which the Emperor and a handful of faithful members of his Guard had entered Addis Ababa after the crushing defeat at Lake Ashangi in April 1936.

The people of Addis Ababa, when they had bought up the coloured silk and cotton in the town, were painting their flag upon their houses, and making garlands of flowers in its colours. Though sheeting was rare and must be husbanded, there was a great washing of old clothes in the streams that filter through Addis to the Akaki plain.

May 5 opened bright and clear. The Italians kept within doors, and the Ethiopian radio made a special announcement after playing the only surviving record of the Ethiopian national anthem, kept in reserve over five years by a far-sighted Armenian jeweller. Fifteen thousand patriots of Ras Ababa Aragai's forces came down Entoto with their quiet leader in the middle of the orderly, mop-haired column, to line the streets of the capital along the processional way. The Ras, with a face no less modest for its scars, spoke in an undertone to his commanders. He was well-equipped in machine-guns and even in mountain artillery; the old police chief of Addis Ababa was also returning to claim his own after five years of fighting in the wilds, never more than 150 miles from the capital. Slobbering droves of oxen went in dust up the winding highway in the eucalyptus to Entoto, where they

would feast the Ras' men in the evening. Women passed, in men's clothes and bearing arms; and old Ethiopian warriors rode by on horseback with bandages round their heads and tilting lances in their hands and chanting; and priests passed in a daze under their silk umbrellas, holding high their flat, ornate silver crosses; and there were a few Italian prisoners in chains who, one had to explain to fellow South Africans, would not be eaten alive or even mutilated at the end of the day, but if they liked raw meat would get their fair slice of the banquet.

Towards midday the Emperor arrived at the summit of Entoto, where he prayed in the church of St. Mary, from whose other side he could see for the first time Addis Ababa floating in the billows of eucalyptus far below, like a mirage that might be stolen away.

The procession formed among the rocks. Ahead, a South African motor-cyclist; next, my loudspeaker van flying the Ethiopian flag; six South African motor-cyclists abreast; three South African armoured cars; two red Italian fire-engines carrying a scramble of the Press; Wingate, close-shaven, carrying a long leather whip on a white horse; the 2nd Ethiopian Battalion under their flag; a cloud of Ethiopian mounted police on white horses carrying carbines round a car containing the Emperor and Major-General Weatherall, commanding the Addis Ababa division; cars with the Princes, the Rases, the Itchegi, Dan, Andrew, Lorenzo; the Sudan Frontier Battalion in clean turbans and grins, with a rich green flag of silk sporting their badge, a golden lion; lorries of Ethiopian exiles, some more armoured cars. We moved slowly down the steep incline and through the crowded streets of Addis Ababa, through many thousands of waving flags and stooping bodies. Lij Yilma at my side called into the microphone, "Today, five years ago, the Italians entered our city to murder and pillage; today, five years after, our King returns, with the aid of a just God and of the English!" Looking through the sides of the van one could see the expressions of the crowd as we descended through the skirting forest. The shock of the first news; the recognition; the faces wrinkling up in a mixture of sorrow at

memory, and of release from sorrow; tears starting suddenly from the faces of old people; wrinkled women raising their arms in ecstasy to the sky; lines of men and women going flat on the ground and kissing it; dignified judges of the Quarters at one moment lifting high their inscribed silk standards and flowers, then bowing low till their foreheads touched the earth; before the centre of the town was reached and the streets were clogged, flocks of people running alongside the Emperor's car shouting proverbs and throwing flowers; old faces in the crowd that one had not expected to see again. Addis Ababa means The New Flower, and as the car entered the town somebody shouted, "The New Flower has flowered again."

The ranks were serried, the individuals were lost in the mass, the expressions grew more uniform, there was no room for bowing, the women only cried out like a swarm of bees on the wing, the men gave the short triple clap. At the gates of Menelik's old palace an artist encouraged by the propaganda section had set up a most horrible representation of the Ethiopian lion disembowelling the Roman wolf; and beyond, waited Lieutenant-General Sir Alan Cunningham, G.O.C. East Africa Force, and a guard of honour of the King's African Rifles and a battery of captured guns, whose Italian ammunition was to be touched off twenty-one times as the Emperor mounted the rostrum to speak, and everybody fell flat as in the book of Daniel.

The power, worked by Italians, at this moment failed for our loudspeaker system, but in a minute wary McSweeney had switched on his alternative plant.

"On this day," said the Emperor, "which men of this earth and angels of Heaven could neither have foreseen nor known, I owe thanks unutterable by the mouth of man to the Loving God who has enabled me to be present among you. Today, I must first tell you, is the beginning of a new era in the history of Ethiopia. In this new era new work for all of us begins.

"Let us go briefly over the history of those evil days through which Ethiopia has had to pass. When Italy

committed her first aggression on our independence which we had maintained for thousands of years, our warriors won the victory of Adowa and saved our independence. The origins of that campaign are not only to be found in the clauses of the Treaty of Ucciali. Italy believed that the moment had arrived for her to crown her old unceasing intrigues and to rule Ethiopia. After her defeat she pretended to be Ethiopia's friend, but she secretly prepared another aggression which, delayed by the Great War, came into the open in the last few years.

"Though Italy when she invaded our country was clearly our superior in modern arms, it was our duty to defend our country to the best of our ability. When she used poison gas against our people and defeated them, we were compelled to go to the League of Nations to appeal for justice. This aggression that Italy had begun was sure to spread through the entire world. Responsible statesmen in the world did their best to bring peace to the world and to prevent the fire from spreading. Great Britain, our greatest friend, received us at this time with open-handed hospitality. We were nevertheless at no time separated in the spirit from the people of our country whose blood was cruelly shed by the Italians; from the churches and the houses that were unlawfully burned; and from those exiles who were scattered in foreign countries and those who suffered in the mountains and wildernesses of their own.

"During those years how many young men and women, priests and monks, were cruelly murdered by the Italians! In Yakatit, in the Year of Grace 1929, on the feast of St. Mikael (17 February 1937), you know that thousands of people were massacred. The blood of those has cried aloud, whose bodies were split with spades and shovels, axes and hammers, who were stabbed to death with bayonets and stoned and killed with clubs, who were burned alive with their children in their houses and died of hunger and thirst in the prison! Everybody among you knows that this cruelty was practised not only in Addis Ababa but in almost every corner of Ethiopia. No single person has not suffered, been trampled down and humiliated.

“Five years ago exactly to this day the Fascist military entered our capital. Mussolini then announced to the world that he had established a Roman Empire in Ethiopia. The nations who recognised his conquest of Ethiopia believed that he would hold the country for ever. The martial qualities of the Ethiopian are universally known, but we had been unable to import the arms necessary for our defence because we had no seaport. Mussolini had been pronounced the aggressor by fifty-two nations, but that was nothing to him; he boasted the more! So the past five years were an age of night for you, my people, but you grazed like sheep upon the mountains of Ethiopia and you did not surrender your hope! In those five years you patriots (*arbenyach*) endured all hardships and maintained your liberty, and the Italians did not dare approach the mountains where you grazed.

“Though the enemy did not control the country, yet he spent many thousands of millions of lire to exploit that part which was under his control. This money was not spent to raise the standard of living of the oppressed Ethiopians nor to compensate them for Italian aggression; but to establish a Fascist colony and a brutal rule in our sacred land. The enemy did not offer Ethiopia a mandate or a protectorate, which in themselves are a harsh yoke upon the independence of a nation; all that he wanted was the annihilation of the races of Ethiopia.

“But the end of the thousands of millions of lire spent here was not what Mussolini thought that it would be.

“When Italy declared war in order to snatch the booty of conquered France she had a mass of men, guns and money in Ethiopia. Her troops numbered not less than 150,000¹ and she had foodstuffs for many years. She thought that she was so prepared as to be impregnable. But what has happened is not in accordance with Fascist aspirations. The *spirit* and the *morale* that are so important a weapon in modern war were revealed in you. Because you co-operated and knew the enemy's methods, because

¹ Actually 300,000.

you understood one another and were the warriors of *one nation*, you were able to defeat an enemy superior to you in arms and men.

“The English were fighting on many other fronts for the liberation of the world, and they needed time to prepare the liberation of Ethiopia. You patriots meanwhile obliged the enemy to remain hidden in his fortifications, you cut his communications and made his life a burden to him. He had powerful defences; but you taught him that his tenure was short and that he could not long remain among people who disliked him and his ways of government. He learned that the people around him were stronger than he, and he abandoned the hope of meeting his other strong opponent with his remaining forces.

“When the time came that our ally the Government of Great Britain was ready to attack the enemy in full force, I came with my soldiers from the far Sudan on our western boundary, and entered the heart of Gojjam. The enemy in Gojjam had powerful forts and a powerful army, aircraft and guns. He was twenty times as strong as us in every respect. Besides this, we had no aircraft or guns at our command when we needed them. But my presence alone among my brave people gathered thousands of men, and the enemy's panic was ever increasing. While my troops were cutting his communications and pursuing him beyond the Blue Nile in Shoa and Begemder, I heard the happy news that the formidable armies of Great Britain had occupied our capital and were pushing northward to Dessie and southward to Jimma. The army of the Sudan had smashed the enemy's strong positions at Keren.

“I therefore gathered my men who were scattered everywhere in pursuit of the enemy, and I am in my capital today. My happiness is boundless: I have been granted the opportunity to lead my own soldiers, crush our common enemy and reach Addis Ababa. I owe thanks without limit to Almighty God, who has enabled me to be with you today in my Royal Palace from which the Fascist Government has been forced to flee!

“People of my country Ethiopia!

“ On this day Ethiopia indeed stretches out her hands to God, shouting and telling out her joy to her own sons!

“ This day also is the day when Ethiopia will yearly celebrate her national feast, for it is the day of the liberation of the sons of Ethiopia from the heavy yoke and the chains of the stranger's government, and the day when we are reunited with our dear and loving people, severed from us for five years. On this day we will remember the heroes who loved their country and gave themselves for her, who shed their blood and crushed their bones to defend that independence which they had inherited from their ancestors, who honoured their King and their Flag.

“ Those sufferings which we have sustained in the last five years and of which we forbear to speak shall be a lesson to us. It is for you to aid us in the work of progress which we will undertake on behalf of Ethiopia. You shall be united, honouring and loving one another. In the new Ethiopia we want you to be an indivisible people, equal before the law, free men all.

“ You are to collaborate with us in our endeavours to develop the country, to enrich the people, to increase agriculture, commerce and education throughout the land, to protect the life and wealth of the nation and to complete those changes in our administration necessary to our new condition.

“ Since today is a day of happiness for us all, for on this day we defeated the enemy; therefore you should rejoice heartily in the spirit of Christ. Do not reward evil for evil. Do not commit any act of cruelty like those which the enemy committed against us up to this present time. Do not allow the enemy any occasion to foul the good name of Ethiopia. We shall take his weapons from the enemy and make him return by the way that he came. St. George who slew the dragon is the patron both of us and of our allies. We should therefore fasten our friendship for ever in an indissoluble bond, to defeat this ungodly and newly-spawned dragon that vexes mankind. Our allies are our friends and our own blood. Take them to your hearts! ”


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The rain came down and washed Addis Ababa into grey as I pressed my nose against the window-pane of Menelik's crumbling audience-hall, and saw the Emperor and British staff officers drinking champagne within. Outside, the loud-speaker car passed ceaselessly up and down, conjuring the people to sit in patience until the Emperor returned. At four the gates opened and he went back in the storm to his own Little Palace, the building that he had himself planned and that Aosta had left intact for his occupation. I looked at the watch on my dripping wrist. Four o'clock in the afternoon of the fifth of May. How vain are the hopes of men, how fragile the buildings of the great, how much better it is to live peaceably, and humbly, and read a book and go for a walk with one's wife and drink with the friends of one's youth, and let sleeping dogs lie. At this very hour five years ago Badoglio drove past our gates at Addis Ababa and proclaimed the Italian Empire immortal.

The dripping white horses cantered by and slipped on the tarmac. The armoured cars slithered into place. Our driver swallowed the end of his sandwich. We shoved up the cover of the Emperor's car and rescued his camel-hair coat from the slush. He, whose cousins had been marched before the firing-squad and whose favourite son-in-law Desta had been shot as a prisoner of war for his head to be exposed on a stake, had nothing to say about the Italians than this: *We shall take his weapons from the enemy and make him return by the way that he came.* He went back to the Little Palace smiling.

There was much that remained to do, but that I did not wait to see. Ethiopia was penniless; the Treasury would have to pay her; that meant, by all the old rules of finance, administrative control of some sort. There were Italian public works without the subsidies to run them; which should go on, and which should cease? What should happen to the Italian population, seeing that nobody was keen to murder them? Where should we get the personnel to run essential services? Freedom is not all. There is a hard price to pay for it, and the account is often rendered late.

To me it was enough that the little man and his flag were there; that we had made promises which we (for I know my people) were bound to redeem; that we had made good at the price of our own blood and sterling the injustice that we had permitted in 1936. We had freed the first of the cruelly treated nations. Our forces could now be sent to other fronts, to drive there something deeper than this trial furrow. Whatever the future, the Ethiopians were happy. The younger ones asked me to a dance—the first, they told me, that they had held since the Italians came. Somehow Sarah Martin, daughter of the old Minister in London, had collected since her return from prison the best American records of 1938 onwards; and somebody else raked up those of before 1935. Everybody there except me, the only Englishman, had lost a brother, or father, or cousin under the Italians. But something made them forget it. They were dancing. Tasfai sat against the wall. “Come on, Tasfai,” we said, “show us the steps of your youth at Mon Cine and the Perroquet in the old days.” That was the last time Tasfai had taken the floor. He smiled, and got up in his English pinstripe suit, and carefully selected his partner; a little rusty on his feet he seemed, after those many weary months.



APPENDIX

ETHIOPIA NO. I (1942)

AGREEMENT AND MILITARY CONVENTION BETWEEN THE UNITED KINGDOM AND ETHIOPIA

Addis Ababa, January 31, 1942

*Presented by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs
to Parliament by Command of His Majesty*

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Controller of H.M. Stationery Office*]

WHEREAS His Majesty the Emperor of Ethiopia, Conquering Lion of the Tribe of Judah, Elect of God (hereinafter referred to as His Majesty the Emperor), wishes to put on record His gratitude and that of His people for the overwhelming and generous aid He has received from the Forces of His Majesty The King of Great Britain, Ireland and the British Dominions beyond the Seas, Emperor of India (hereinafter referred to as His Majesty The King), which has enabled Him and His people to recover their national territory; and

Whereas His Majesty the Emperor, true to His coronation pledges not to surrender His sovereignty or the independence of His people, but conscious of the needs of His country, has intimated to the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (hereinafter referred to as the Government of the United Kingdom) that He is eager to receive advice and financial assistance in the difficult task of reconstruction and reform; and

Whereas the Government of the United Kingdom recognise that Ethiopia is now a free and independent State and His Majesty the Emperor, Hailé Sellassié I, is its lawful Ruler, and, the reconquest of Ethiopia being now complete, wish to help His Majesty the Emperor to re-establish His Government and to assist in providing for the immediate needs of the country:

Now, therefore, His Majesty the Emperor of Ethiopia in person, and Major-General Sir Philip Euen Mitchell, Knight Commander of the Most Distinguished Order of Saint Michael and Saint George, upon whom has been conferred the decoration of the Military Cross, Chief Political Officer, on the Staff of the General Officer Commanding-in-Chief, East Africa, being duly authorised for this purpose by the Government of the United Kingdom,
Have agreed as follows:

ARTICLE I

Diplomatic relations between the United Kingdom and Ethiopia shall be re-established and conducted through a British Minister Plenipotentiary accredited to His Majesty the Emperor and an Ethiopian Minister Plenipotentiary accredited to His Majesty The King, who shall be appointed as soon as possible after the entry into force of this Agreement. His Majesty the Emperor agrees that the Diplomatic Representative of His Majesty The King shall take precedence over any other foreign Representative accredited to His Imperial Majesty.

ARTICLE II

(a) His Majesty the Emperor having requested the Government of the United Kingdom to assist him in obtaining the services of British subjects (i) as advisers to himself and his administration; (ii) as Commissioner of Police, Police officers and inspectors; and (iii) as judges and magistrates, the Government of the United Kingdom will use their best endeavours to assist His Majesty the Emperor in this matter. The number of such British subjects, their salaries, privileges, duties and powers, and the appointments they are to fill, shall be the subject of separate agreements between the Contracting Parties.

(b) His Majesty the Emperor agrees not to appoint advisers additional to those referred to in paragraph (a) above except after consultation with the Government of the United Kingdom.

ARTICLE III

Subject to the provisions of the Military Convention concluded this day, and of Article VII of this Agreement, the jurisdiction and administration exercised by British military tribunals and authorities shall terminate as soon as they can be replaced by effective Ethiopian civilian administration and jurisdiction, which His Majesty the Emperor will set up as soon as possible. Nevertheless, British military tribunals shall finish any cases then pending before them. The Ethiopian authorities will recognise and, where necessary, enforce decisions previously given by British military tribunals.

ARTICLE IV

(a) His Majesty the Emperor, having intimated to the Government of the United Kingdom that he will require financial aid in order to re-establish his administration, the Government of the United Kingdom will grant to His Majesty the sum of Pounds Sterling one million five hundred thousand during the first year and Pounds Sterling one million during the second year of the currency of this Agreement. If this Agreement remains in force for a third year, the Government of the United Kingdom agree to pay to His Majesty the Emperor the sum of Pounds Sterling five hundred thousand in respect of such third year, and if for a fourth year, then the sum of Pounds Sterling two hundred and fifty thousand shall be paid in respect of that year. Payments will be made in quarterly instalments in advance.

(b) His Majesty the Emperor agrees for his part that this grant shall absolve the Government of the United Kingdom from any payments in respect of the use of immovable property of the Ethiopian State which may be required by the British forces in Ethiopia during the war.

(c) His Majesty the Emperor agrees that there shall be the closest co-operation between the Ethiopian authorities and his British Advisers, to be appointed in accordance with Article II (a), regarding public expenditure.

(d) In order to facilitate the absorption into Ethiopian economy of the funds to be provided under paragraph (a) above, and to promote the early resumption of trade between Ethiopia and the surrounding territories, His Majesty the Emperor agrees that in all matters relating to currency in Ethiopia the Government of the United Kingdom shall be consulted and that arrangements concerning it shall be made only with the concurrence of that Government.

ARTICLE V

(a) Jurisdiction over foreigners shall be exercised by the Ethiopian Courts constituted according to the draft Statute attached hereto as an Annex, which His Majesty the Emperor will promulgate forthwith and will maintain in force during the continuance of this Agreement, except in so far as it may require amendment in any manner agreed upon by the parties to this Agreement.

(b) Any foreigner who is a party to any proceedings, civil or criminal, within the jurisdiction of a Regional Communal or Provincial Court, may elect to have the case transferred without additional fee or charge to the High Court for trial. Provisions to this effect shall be included in the Rules of Court.

(c) In the hearing by the High Court of any matter to which a foreigner is a party at least one of the British Judges mentioned in Article II (a) shall sit as a member of the Court.

(d) His Majesty the Emperor agrees to direct that foreigners shall be incarcerated only in prisons approved for the purpose by the Commissioner of Police appointed in accordance with Article II (a).

ARTICLE VI

(a) His Majesty the Emperor agrees to enact laws against trading with the enemy in terms proposed to him by the Government of the United Kingdom.

(b) His Majesty the Emperor accepts full responsibility for seeing that private enemy property is dealt with in accordance with international law. His Majesty agrees to consult with the British Diplomatic Representative as to the measures to be taken to this end.

ARTICLE VII

His Majesty the Emperor agrees—

(a) That all prisoners of war shall be handed over to the custody of the British Military Authorities, who will evacuate them from Ethiopia as soon as possible, and

- (b) That he will enact such legislation as may be required to enable the General Officer Commanding-in-Chief the British forces in East Africa and officers acting under his authority to exercise such temporary local powers as may be necessary for the administration, control and evacuation of Italian civilians in Ethiopia.

ARTICLE VIII

The Government of the United Kingdom will use their best endeavours—

- (a) To secure the return of Ethiopians in Italian hands, and
(b) To secure the return of artistic works, religious property and the like removed to Italy and belonging to His Majesty the Emperor, the Ethiopian State, or local or religious bodies.

ARTICLE IX

In areas in which the General Officer Commanding-in-Chief the British forces in East Africa may find it necessary to conduct military operations against the common enemy in future, His Majesty the Emperor will, at the request of the said General Officer Commanding-in-Chief, declare a state of emergency and will confer on the General Officer Commanding-in-Chief the powers resulting from such declaration. Any legislation necessary to secure these powers will be promulgated by His Majesty the Emperor. The Ethiopian Government and local authorities will give such aid and concurrence to the General Officer Commanding-in-Chief as may be needed.

ARTICLE X

His Majesty the Emperor agrees not to conduct any external military operation which, in the opinion of the General Officer Commanding-in-Chief the British forces in East Africa, is contrary to the joint interests of Ethiopia and the United Kingdom.

ARTICLE XI

(a) His Majesty the Emperor will accord freedom of passage to, in and over Ethiopia to duly registered British civil aircraft, provided that such regulations governing air navigation as may be in force in Ethiopia are observed.

(b) His Majesty the Emperor will permit a British Air Transport organisation or organisations, to be designated by the Government of the United Kingdom, to operate regular Air Services to, in and over Ethiopia for the carriage of passengers, mails and freight. For this purpose the said organisations shall be permitted to use such aerodromes, ground equipment and facilities as are available, and to provide such other aerodromes, ground equipment and facilities as may be necessary.

(c) His Majesty the Emperor will not permit foreign aircraft other than British to fly to, in or over Ethiopia without the concurrence of the Government of the United Kingdom.

ARTICLE XII

The present Agreement shall enter in force as from this day's date. It shall remain in force until replaced by a Treaty for which His Majesty the Emperor may wish to make proposals. If it is not so replaced within two years from this date, it may thereafter be terminated at any time by either Party giving three months' notice to the other to this effect.

In witness whereof the undersigned have signed the present Agreement and affixed thereto their seals.

Done this thirty-first day of January 1942 in the English and Amharic languages, both of which shall be equally authoritative except in case of doubt, when the English text shall prevail.

(L.S.) HAILE SELASSIE I. (L.S.) P. E. MITCHELL.

ANNEX

DRAFT ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE PROCLAMATION

Part I.—*Preliminary*

1. This Proclamation may be cited as the Administration of Justice Proclamation.

2. The following Courts shall be established in Our Empire and shall be constituted in the manner hereinafter described and shall exercise the powers conferred on them by this Proclamation over all persons in Ethiopia:—

- (a) The Supreme Imperial Court.
- (b) The High Court.
- (c) The Provincial Courts.
- (d) Regional and Communal Courts.

Part II.—*The Supreme Imperial Court*

3. The Supreme Imperial Court shall comprise the Afa Negus as President, together with two judges of the High Court, who shall be nominated by the President of the High Court for the hearing of any appeal from the High Court. No judge shall be nominated by the President of the High Court to hear any appeal in any case upon which he adjudicated as a member of the High Court. When in any matter the members of the Supreme Imperial Court are not unanimous, the opinion of the majority shall prevail.

Part III.—*The High Court*

4. The High Court of Ethiopia shall comprise such number of judges as We may from time to time think necessary, of whom one shall be designated the President. The High Court shall contain such number of judges of British nationality as We shall consider to be desirable.

5. No person shall be appointed by Us to the office of Judge of Our High Court unless he is a regularly qualified legal practitioner or is certified to Us by Our Minister of Justice to be qualified for such office by reason of long judicial experience or sound knowledge of law.

6. We may also appoint from time to time fit persons as additional judges of the High Court for the trial of particular cases or for a specified period or while holding any specified office.

7. The High Court shall have full criminal and civil jurisdiction in Ethiopia according to law.

8. The High Court shall be deemed to be fully constituted for the hearing of any matter when it comprises three judges, and where in any matter the members of the Court are not unanimous, the opinion of the majority shall prevail.

9. The High Court may sit at any place within Our Empire as may be convenient for the despatch of business.

10. An appeal shall lie to the Supreme Imperial Court from any decision of the High Court when acting as a court of first instance, in the manner laid down in Rules of Court.

11. No sentence of death shall be carried into execution unless confirmed by Us.

Part IV.—*Provincial Courts*

12. In each of the Provinces of Our Empire there shall be established a Provincial Court, which shall comprise such number of provincial judges appointed by Us as We may from time to time think necessary. One judge of each Provincial Court shall be designated the President.

13. We may also appoint from time to time fit persons as additional provincial judges for the trial of particular cases or for a specified period or while holding any specified office.

14. A Provincial Court shall be deemed to be fully constituted for the hearing of any matter when it comprises three members and where in regard to any matter the members of the Court are not unanimous, the opinion of the majority shall prevail.

15. A Provincial Court may sit at any place within the Province for which it is constituted as may be convenient for the despatch of business.

16.—(1) The jurisdiction of a Provincial Court in its original jurisdiction shall be limited:—

(a) In criminal matters to—

(i) imprisonment not exceeding 5 years.

(ii) fine not exceeding 2,000 M.T. dollars.

(iii) corporal punishment not exceeding 20 lashes, and shall extend to any combination of the above punishments.

(b) In civil matters, to cases, the subject matter of which does not exceed 2,000 M.T. dollars.

(2) A Provincial Court shall have such jurisdiction to hear appeals from Courts established under Article 18 of the Proclamation as may be prescribed by the warrant of any such court and any decision of a Provincial Court on appeal shall be final.

17. An appeal shall lie from any Provincial Court as a Court of First Instance to the High Court in the manner laid down by Rules of Court and any decision of the High Court on such appeal shall be final.

Part V.—*Regional and Communal Courts*

18. Notwithstanding the jurisdiction of the High Court and the Provincial Courts it shall be lawful for Us to establish by warrant under Our hand other courts of criminal and civil jurisdiction which shall be subordinate to the Provincial Courts. Such warrant shall define the Constitution of the Court, the area within which the court exercises jurisdiction, the law to be administered and shall impose such limitations upon the jurisdiction and powers of the court as may appear necessary. Appeals shall lie from courts established under this article to such court or courts as may be specified in the warrant establishing a Court.

Part VI.—*Assessors*

19. Any Court constituted under this Proclamation may, if it sees fit, sit with two or more suitable persons in the capacity of Assessors. Assessors shall be entitled to put any relevant question to any witness and, at the conclusion of the case, shall give their opinions on the facts in issue, but the Court shall not be bound by the opinions of the Assessors.

Part VII.—*Rules of Court*

20. Rules of Court may be made, with the approval of Our Minister of Justice, by the Afa Negus in respect of the Supreme Imperial Court and by the President of the High Court in respect of any other Courts established by this Proclamation for the purposes of—

- (a) Regulating the administration of the Court, and the institution, conduct and hearing of proceedings therein.
- (b) Regulating the admission, conduct and discipline of legal practitioners.
- (c) Regulating the selection and duties of assessors.
- (d) Regulating the committal of criminal cases from lower courts to higher courts.
- (e) Regulating the imposition and recovery of fines, the award of imprisonment in default of payment and the procedure relating to execution and attachment.
- (f) Prescribing forms.
- (g) Fixing fees.
- (h) Regulating the general administration of justice.

Part VIII.—*General*

21. For the better examination of laws submitted to Us for enactment there is hereby established a Consultative Committee for legislation, which shall comprise Our Judicial Adviser, the President of the High Court, and three persons having recognised legal qualifications or being qualified by reason of long judicial experience and sound knowledge of law to be especially appointed by Us. The duty of such Committee shall be to draft laws upon Our directions or to review the draft of any proposed law. No law shall be submitted to Us for enactment unless it is accompanied by a certificate signed by a majority of the members of the

said Committee certifying that the law to which the certificate relates is not repugnant to natural justice and humanity and is a fit and proper law to be applied without discrimination to Ethiopians and foreigners alike.

22. When any law has been enacted by Us it shall be published in the *Official Gazette* of Ethiopia in the Amharic and English languages, and shall come into force from the date of publication in the *Gazette* or from any other date which may be specified in the law.

23. Nothing contained in this Proclamation shall prevent the hearing and settlement of minor disputes in any manner traditionally recognised by Ethiopian law until such time as regular courts can be established for the hearing of such disputes by judges duly appointed by Us on the recommendation of Our Minister of Justice.

24. It is hereby declared that no court shall give effect to any existing law which is contrary to natural justice or humanity, or which makes any harsh or inequitable differentiation between Our subjects and foreigners.

MILITARY CONVENTION BETWEEN HIS MAJESTY'S GOVERNMENT IN THE UNITED KINGDOM AND THE EMPEROR OF ETHIOPIA

Whereas His Majesty the Emperor of Ethiopia, Conquering Lion of the Tribe of Judah, Elect of God (hereinafter referred to as His Majesty the Emperor), and the Government of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (hereinafter referred to as the Government of the United Kingdom) desire to provide for certain matters relating to mutual assistance as Allies in the struggle against the common enemy, and have decided to conclude a Military Convention for this purpose.

Now, therefore,

His Majesty the Emperor of Ethiopia in person and
Major-General Sir Philip Euen Mitchell, Knight Commander of the
Most Distinguished Order of Saint Michael and Saint George, upon
whom has been conferred the decoration of the Military Cross, Chief
Political Officer, on the Staff of the General Officer Commanding-in-
Chief, East Africa, being duly authorised for this purpose by the
Government of the United Kingdom,

Have agreed as follows:—

ARTICLE I

- (a) In this Convention the expression "British Forces" includes:—
- (i) every person subject to the Naval Discipline Act, the Army Act or the Air Force Act of the United Kingdom, or the corresponding enactments of other parts of the dominions of His Majesty The King of Great Britain, Ireland and the British Dominions beyond the Seas, Emperor of India (hereinafter referred to as His Majesty The King), who is stationed with, or attached to, the British Forces which are present in Ethiopia in accordance with the provisions of this Convention;
 - (ii) every civilian official of British nationality accompanying or serving with the said forces in Ethiopia, or the Expeditionary Forces Institutes, who is either granted relative status as an

- officer, or holds a pass designating his civil official status, issued by the Appropriate British Authority as hereinafter defined, and is paid from the funds of any part of the dominions of His Majesty The King or the Expeditionary Forces Institutes; and
- (iii) wives and children under 21 years of age, of the persons mentioned in paragraphs (i) and (ii) above.
 - (iv) members of any Allied Forces serving in Ethiopia under the British High Command.
- (b) The expression "Appropriate British Authority" means:—
- (i) in the case of members of the British Naval Forces, the Senior British Naval officer for the time being within Ethiopia, or if there be no British Naval officer within Ethiopia, a General or other officer for the time being commanding the British Troops in Ethiopia;
 - (ii) in the case of members of the British Land Forces, a General or other officer for the time being commanding the British Troops in Ethiopia;
 - (iii) in the case of members of the British Air Forces, an Air or other officer for the time being commanding the Royal Air Force in Ethiopia.

(c) Any authority given to, or any act or thing to be done by, to or for, any Appropriate British Authority, may be exercised by, or done by, to or for, any other person for the time being authorised in that behalf according to the custom of the particular service of His Majesty The King.

(d) The expression "British Cantonment" means all the areas and places allocated to the British Forces, and includes any temporary camps and bivouacs established by the British Forces for their use, and also camps established for prisoners of war or for Italian civilians pending evacuation.

ARTICLE 2

(a) The Government of the United Kingdom will provide, at their own cost, a Military Mission for the purpose of raising, organising and training, the Ethiopian Army. The duties and privileges of the Military Mission shall be the subject of instructions from the General Officer Commanding-in-Chief, the British Forces in East Africa, to the Head of the Military Mission, which shall be agreed upon between His Majesty the Emperor and the General Officer Commanding-in-Chief.

(b) The Military Mission will be retained in Ethiopia until His Majesty the Emperor no longer requires its services, or until the British forces in Ethiopia mentioned in Article 6 below are withdrawn, whichever is the earlier. When the Government of the United Kingdom cease to provide the Military Mission at their own cost, they will use their best endeavours to assist His Majesty the Emperor to obtain suitable officers to take the place of any members of the original Mission who do not remain in Ethiopia.

(c) The Ethiopian Army mentioned in paragraph (a) above shall be armed and equipped so far as possible from booty taken from the Italian forces in the course of the campaign in Ethiopia.

ARTICLE 3

The areas specified in the Schedule attached hereto, and such other areas and places as may be agreed upon between the Parties either in addition to or in substitution for the said areas and places, shall remain under British military administration to the extent which, and so long as, the General Officer Commanding-in-Chief, the British Forces in East Africa, in consultation with His Majesty the Emperor, considers necessary.

ARTICLE 4

(a) The Government of the United Kingdom will maintain, and the General Officer Commanding-in-Chief, the British Forces in East Africa, will have under his command, such Police Force as in the opinion of the said General Officer Commanding-in-Chief, is necessary in respect of the areas specified in Article 3.

(b) Having regard to the special circumstances existing in Addis Ababa and of the responsibilities undertaken by the Government of the United Kingdom in respect of Italian civilians, the Government of the United Kingdom will maintain, and the General Officer Commanding-in-Chief, the British Forces in East Africa, will command such Police Force as he considers necessary for the safety and good order of the town of Addis Ababa until such time as the Police Force to be raised by His Majesty the Emperor is able to assume these duties. His Majesty the Emperor will enact such legislation as may be necessary to confer upon this Police Force the powers and status which it requires.

(c) Until the British Forces are withdrawn from Ethiopia, the General Officer Commanding-in-Chief, the British Forces in East Africa, or the General Officer Commanding the British Forces in Ethiopia as his representative, shall have the right of direct access to His Majesty the Emperor, and shall take precedence immediately after the Diplomatic Representative of His Majesty The King.

ARTICLE 5

His Majesty the Emperor agrees that the part of the territory of the Ogaden which was included in the former Italian Colonial Government of Somalia shall, during the currency of this Convention, remain under the British Military Administration of Somalia.

ARTICLE 6

The Government of the United Kingdom shall have the right to keep such military forces in Ethiopia as they think necessary. The rights and immunities in Ethiopia of these forces and of the Military Mission referred to in Article 2 are as defined in this Convention.

ARTICLE 7

Without prejudice to the fact that British cantonments are upon Ethiopian territory, the said cantonments shall be inviolable and shall be subject to the exclusive control and authority of the appropriate British Authority.

ARTICLE 8

His Majesty the Emperor consents to the enjoyment by the British Forces of—

(a) complete freedom of movement of personnel, vehicles, animals and materials between British cantonments, and generally such freedom of movement elsewhere as such forces enjoy in the United Kingdom;

(b) the same rights as to camping, billeting and security as the rights which such Forces enjoy in the United Kingdom;

(c) the right to generate light and power, and to search and bore for or collect water for use in British cantonments, and to transmit and distribute such light, power, and water between the place of generation or collection and any British cantonment or between British cantonments by means of cables, pipes or in any other way whatsoever;

(d) entry into and departure from Ethiopia of members of the British Forces at all times without let or hindrance, subject only to the production of a certificate showing membership of the British Forces in cases when such members do not arrive or leave by a service aircraft, service transport or as a formed body under command of an Officer, Warrant Officer, or Non-Commissioned Officer;

(e) the use of roads, streams, lakes, waterways and other bodies of water for personnel, vehicles, animals, materials or waterborne craft on the service of His Majesty The King, without payment of any dues, tolls or charges whatsoever;

(f) the same immunity regarding the official correspondence of the British Forces and their couriers as is enjoyed in international law by the Diplomatic Representatives of foreign States;

(g) the right to establish and carry on Army postal services for the handling and conveyance of all correspondence of the British Forces.

ARTICLE 9

The General Officer Commanding-in-Chief, the British Forces in East Africa, may, for as long as he deems necessary:—

(a) Continue to use and occupy without payment any immovable property formerly belonging to the Italian State which he still requires. His Majesty the Emperor will also make available to the Government of the United Kingdom any other such property which is needed by the British Forces.

(b) Construct and maintain such additional buildings, defences, roads, railways, water supplies, wireless transmitting stations, telephones and telegraphs as he considers necessary for military purposes.

(c) Continue the British military operation, management and maintenance of the Franco-Ethiopian Railway.

(d) Continue the operation, management and maintenance of the high-power beam wireless transmitting station situated at Addis Ababa, together with the remote control stations, receiving terminal stations and all apparatus belonging thereto, and such existing telegraph and telephone installations as are required for the British Forces.

- (e) Continue to control and operate, whether by requisition, contract or other means, such privately-owned vehicles as he may need for military purposes and for the maintenance and evacuation of the Italian civilian population.

ARTICLE 10

Subject to the provisions of Article 2 (c), booty taken by the British Forces in the course of the campaign in Ethiopia will be retained by them.

ARTICLE 11

(a) In view of the fact that the speed and range of modern aircraft necessitate the use of wide areas, the Emperor will accord permission to the British Air Forces and the Air Forces of the Allies to fly in Ethiopia wherever they consider it necessary.

(b) In view of the fact that the safety of flying is dependent upon provision of a large number of places where aircraft can alight, His Majesty the Emperor will secure the constant maintenance and availability of adequate landing grounds in Ethiopian territory, in addition to those subject to Article 3 of this Convention. His Majesty the Emperor will accede to any request from the Appropriate British Authority for the construction, at the cost of the Government of the United Kingdom, of such additional landing grounds or the extension of existing landing grounds as experience may show to be necessary.

(c) His Majesty the Emperor will accord permission for the British Air Forces and the Air Forces of the Allies to use the said landing grounds, and, in case of urgency, will, at the request of the Appropriate British Authority, cause the Appropriate Ethiopian Authority to undertake such work at the cost of the Government of the United Kingdom, as may be necessary for the safety or repair of aircraft, or will agree to such work being carried out by the General Officer Commanding-in-Chief, the British Forces in East Africa.

(d) His Majesty the Emperor will give all necessary facilities for the passage of the personnel of the British Forces, aircraft and stores to and from the said landing grounds.

(e) His Majesty the Emperor freely offers every assistance to British or Allied aircraft in distress.

ARTICLE 12

His Majesty the Emperor will provide for the continued operation of so much of the legislation enacted by the British Military Authorities as is considered by the Government of the United Kingdom to be necessary for the security of the British Forces in Ethiopia. His Majesty will also at the request of the Government of the United Kingdom enact and enforce such further legislation as may be required for the security of the said Forces.

ARTICLE 13

His Majesty the Emperor will at the request of the General Officer Commanding-in-Chief, the British Forces in East Africa, requisition and

hand over to the British Forces any private property outside the areas referred to in Article 3 which may be required by these forces, subject to the reasonable needs of Ethiopia.

ARTICLE 14

(a) Save as hereinafter provided, no member of the British Forces referred to in paragraphs (a) (i) and (a) (iv) of Article 1 shall be subject to the criminal jurisdiction of the Courts of Ethiopia, and no member of the British Forces referred to in paragraphs (a) (ii) and (a) (iii) of Article 1 shall be subject to the criminal jurisdiction of the Courts of Ethiopia in respect of any criminal offence committed in any of the areas referred to in Article 3.

(b) No member of the British Forces shall be subject to the civil jurisdiction of the Courts of Ethiopia in respect of any matter arising out of his official duties. If any civil proceeding is instituted against a member of the British Forces before any Ethiopian Court, notification of the proceedings shall forthwith be given to the Diplomatic Representative of His Majesty The King, and no further steps shall be taken in such proceedings until sixty days have elapsed from the date of notification. This period shall be extended for a further term of one hundred and twenty days if the Diplomatic Representative of His Majesty The King states in writing to the Court that it has not been possible to conclude the necessary investigations in the above time.

(c) A statement in writing to an Ethiopian Court by the Diplomatic Representative of His Majesty The King that the civil proceedings in respect of which notice has been given arise out of the official duties of a member of the British Forces shall be taken as conclusive evidence by the Court of that fact.

(d) No member of the British Forces shall be committed to prison in default of satisfaction of any judgment or order of any Ethiopian Court or tribunal, until the sanction in writing of the Appropriate British Authority has been obtained.

ARTICLE 15

Any claims in respect of reparation for damage or injury caused or alleged to have been caused, by any person or persons forming part of the British Forces, in any matter arising out of his or their official duties, shall be referred in the first instance to the Appropriate British Authority. Any difference of opinion shall be referred to a Joint Claims Commission, to be set up in case of need by the Appropriate British and Ethiopian Authorities. Any claim in respect of which the Joint Claims Commission fails to reach agreement shall be settled by the parties to this Convention.

ARTICLE 16

(a) The Appropriate British Authority will, on receipt of an application signed by the appropriate official of the Ethiopian Ministry of Justice, surrender any person not being a member of the British Forces and who is within any British cantonment or reserved area, and against whom a

warrant of arrest has been issued in respect of any offence triable by an Ethiopian Court.

(b) Every application for the surrender of an offender under this Article shall be accompanied by a certified true copy of the warrant of arrest and by such information as is available regarding the identity and whereabouts of the person whose surrender is desired.

ARTICLE 17

The appropriate Ethiopian Authority will take all possible steps—

- (a) to search for, apprehend and hand over, any member of the British Forces who is claimed as a deserter or absentee without leave, upon request made in writing by the Appropriate British Authority;
- (b) to prosecute any person not being a member of the British Forces who is accused of an offence in relation to such Forces which, if committed in relation to the Ethiopian Army, would have rendered him liable to prosecution, if such an offence is not within the jurisdiction of any British Military Court;
- (c) to detain and hand over to the Appropriate British Authority any member of the British Forces in Ethiopia who is notified by the Appropriate British Authority as having committed an offence or who has come into conflict with the Ethiopian Authorities in any manner.

ARTICLE 18

(a) Members of the British Forces shall be liable to arrest by the Ethiopian Authorities only in such circumstances as are specified in paragraphs (a) and (c) of Article 17.

(b) When any member of the British Forces is arrested, the following procedure will be adopted:—

- (i) notification of the arrest, giving the name and other particulars of the person arrested, together with information as to the nature of the offence for which the said person was arrested and the evidence in support of the charge, will be sent forthwith to the Appropriate British Authority;
 - (ii) the alleged offender will be handed over on demand to the Appropriate British Authority.
- (c) When it is alleged that a member of the British Forces has committed an offence for which he has not been arrested, particulars of such alleged offence, together with the statements of any witnesses, will be sent with all convenient speed to the Appropriate British Authority.
- (d) Where a member of the British Forces is charged with the commission of an offence and evidence is available which appears to substantiate the charge, the Appropriate British Authority will cause such member to be tried for the offence by an appropriate tribunal of the British Forces, and will in due course arrange for the Appropriate Ethiopian Authority to be informed, through the Diplomatic Representative of His Majesty The King, of the result of the trial.

Where, however, the Appropriate British Authority considers that for any reason it is desirable for a member of the British Forces to be tried

for a criminal offence by an Ethiopian Court, he may give a certificate in writing to that effect, and thereupon such Court shall have jurisdiction, notwithstanding the provisions of Article 14.

ARTICLE 19

The British Forces shall be entitled to send an armed escort to any part of Ethiopia for the purpose of taking over and escorting to British cantonments or reserved areas any member of the British Forces arrested under the provisions of paragraph (a) or (c) of Article 17.

ARTICLE 20

(a) The appropriate Ethiopian Authority shall, at the request in writing of the Appropriate British Authority, take all reasonable steps to secure the attendance of persons amenable to its jurisdiction as witnesses before any of the tribunals of the British Forces in Ethiopia convened and assembled by the Appropriate British Authority.

(b) The Government of the United Kingdom will take all reasonable steps to secure the attendance of any member of the British Forces as a witness in any proceedings before any Ethiopian tribunal, upon application being made to the Appropriate British Authority signed by an authorised official of the Ministry of Justice or the President of the tribunal concerned.

ARTICLE 21

(a) His Majesty the Emperor agrees that where any person not being a member of the British Forces, who has been ordered to attend a tribunal of the British Forces under Article 20 (a), is accused of any of the following offences, such person will be prosecuted before the appropriate Ethiopian Court, that is to say:—

- (i) being duly summoned makes default in attending; or
- (ii) refuses to take oath or make a solemn declaration legally required to be taken or made; or
- (iii) refuses to produce any document in his power or control legally required to be produced by him; or
- (iv) refuses when a witness to answer any question to which the tribunal may legally require an answer; or
- (v) is guilty of contempt of the tribunal by using insulting or threatening language or by causing interruption or disturbance in the proceedings of such tribunal; or
- (vi) when examined on oath or solemn declaration before the tribunal wilfully gives false evidence.

(b) Similarly, the Government of the United Kingdom agrees that—

- (i) any member of the British Forces referred to in paragraphs (a) (i) and (a) (iv) of Article 1; and
- (ii) any member of the British Forces referred to in paragraphs (a) (ii) and (a) (iii) of Article 1 residing in any British cantonment or reserved area;

who is ordered to attend an Ethiopian tribunal under Article 20 (b) and who commits any of the offences above specified, shall be prosecuted before the appropriate tribunal of the British Forces.

ARTICLE 22

(a) Members of the British Forces who are owners by Ethiopian Law of real property in Ethiopia shall pay the same taxes, registration and transfer fees as do Ethiopian subjects, in respect of such property and its produce.

(b) Members of the British Forces shall pay any taxes or registration fees for the time being in force for any privately-owned vehicles used on any public road in Ethiopia which are paid by Ethiopian subjects.

(c) The British Forces, the Expeditionary Forces Institutes and all other official canteens of the British Forces shall pay at most favoured rates for all services rendered by departments of the Ethiopian Government or any municipal or local authority.

(d) Save as above provided, British cantonments or Reserved Areas, the British Forces and the individual members thereof shall be immune from all direct taxation, import and export duties and all registration fees or similar charges, unless there shall be an agreement between the Government of the United Kingdom and His Majesty the Emperor to the contrary in regard to any particular tax or charge.

(e) The Government of the United Kingdom shall have complete freedom to import, export or move within Ethiopia any vehicles, goods, stores or materials of any kind belonging to the Government of the United Kingdom or any Government of the dominions of His Majesty The King.

(f) Where any vehicles, goods, stores or materials upon which import duty has been paid on entry into Ethiopia are purchased in Ethiopia in bulk at wholesale rates by the Government of the United Kingdom, or by any Government of the dominions of His Majesty The King or by the Expeditionary Forces Institutes or any recognised Military, Naval or Air Force mess, club or institute, a rebate of any import duty paid thereon shall be payable by the Emperor.

ARTICLE 23

This Convention shall come into effect with the Agreement signed this day between the Government of the United Kingdom and His Majesty the Emperor, and shall, subject to any other agreement between the Parties, continue in force so long as the said Agreement continues in force.

In witness whereof the undersigned have signed the present Agreement and affixed thereto their seals.

Done this thirty-first day of January 1942, in the English and Amharic languages, both of which shall be equally authoritative except in cases of doubt, when the English text shall prevail.

(L.S.) HAILE SELASSIE I. (L.S.) P. E. MITCHELL.

SCHEDULE

1. A continuous belt of Ethiopian territory 25 miles wide contiguous to the frontier of French Somaliland running from the frontier of Eritrea

to the Franco-Ethiopian Railway. Thence south-west along the railway to the bridge at Haraua. Thence south and south-east, excluding Gildessa, to the north-eastern extremity of the Garais Mountains and along the crest of the ridge of these mountains to their intersection with the frontier of the former Italian colony of Somalia. Thence along the frontier to its junction with British Somaliland.

2. All land within Ethiopia occupied by the Franco-Ethiopian Railway and its appurtenances.

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Appendix A

LETTER SIGNED BY MAJOR-GENERAL WILLIAM
PLATT, C.B., D.S.O., COMMANDING TROOPS
IN THE SUDAN, TO ALL ETHIOPIAN CHIEFS
ON THE OUTBREAK OF WAR

Translation

May it reach...

Peace be unto You

Now the British and the Italians are at war. In order to crush our mutual enemy we will help all we can. If you need rifles, ammunition, food or money, send to us men and pack animals as many as you can to the place which the messenger will show you. Whatever you want, we can help you. Also it would be better if you would send us your own representative to speak with us and to consult as to how we can best injure the enemy.

(Signed) W. PLATT,
Commander of the Forces.

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Appendix B

FIRST DECREE OF THE EMPEROR HAILE SELLASSIE

Translation and Reproduction

IMPERIAL SEAL

Ethiopia raises her hands to God!

Haile Sellassie the First

Elect of God

Emperor of Ethiopia

People, Chiefs and Warriors of Ethiopia!

Your courage and your tenacity in confronting the enemy with an implacable resistance during the last five years have won you the sympathy and admiration of all free peoples. Your sufferings and your sacrifices, your heroism and your hopes will not have been in vain.

The day of your deliverance has come.

From today, Great Britain grants us the aid of her incomparable military might, to win back our entire independence.

I am coming to you.

Let us thank God for having turned upon us His pitying regard and let our thoughts go out, at this moment, in emotion and in recognition to the heroes who have fallen on the field of battle and to the thousands who have fallen victim to the atrocities of Italian fascism.

People, Chiefs and Warriors of Ethiopia!

The Italian Government has declared war on Great Britain, because she maintained the principles of the League of Nations and because she applied the sanctions of the Covenant against Italy when Italy committed her aggression on our country.

You know what you have to do. Those among you who have submitted to the enemy must redeem themselves at once by deserting the Italian ranks and uniting with the Ethiopian forces. Let none of them be the enemy's instrument, either by action or by word.

Harass the enemy wherever he is found, and occupy his roads and communications.

Brave Warriors of Ethiopia!

I know the merits of every one of you, and I speed to see your feats of arms.

You the fighters, according to your bravery; you the old men and the men of God, according to the counsel that you have given to your people; you the farmers, traders and artisans, according as your work has aided your Fatherland; you will all receive your recompense.

And you, the people of Hamasien, of Akelegousai, of Serac, of Beni Amer, of the Habab and of Mensah, whether you are on this side or the other of the Mareb, join in the struggle at the side of your Ethiopian brothers. Let none of you be a tool in the hands of the Italians against your motherland of Ethiopia, or against our friends the English.

I know the prayers of your heart, which are mine also, and the prayers

መግ. ነገሱ. ቃል፡ ጌዳኖች፤ ከእንግሊዝ፡ በካማዊና ቱቅር፡ ያለበት፡ ከቀጣበል፡ ይጠባባቅሃል፡፡

በሐላላ፤ በስተ፡ ሰሜን፡ ሽቶል፡ ያለኸው፡ የሁለት፡ ቀን፡ ሰንትህን፡ ይዘህ፡ በሐላላ፡ እገር፡ እያደረግህ፡ ከኢርትራ፡ ባሕር፡ ጠረፍ፡ እስካለው፡ ከቂቅ፡ ድረስ፡ ብትሄድ፡ ደገኛ የዘመድ፡ ከቀጣበል፡ ተዘጋጅቶልሃል፡፡

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ባሽብዙቅና፡ ባንዱ !

እጅግ፡ ቅርብ፡ ሁነገልሃል፡ ሕዝባችን፡ ነፃ የሚወግበት፡ ቀንም፡ እጅግ፡ ቅርብ፡ ሁኖ ልሃል፡፡ በዚህ ቀን ከናንተ፡ እያንዳንዱ፡ ሠንደቃካማችንና፡ ሠራዊታችን፡ በረዳ በት መጠን፡ ዋጋውን፡ ይቀበላል፡፡

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besides of all the people of Ethiopia. Your destiny is strictly bound with that of the rest of Ethiopia.

People of Ethiopia!

Just as in war you share the sufferings, so in the work of reconstruction and progress that we are going to undertake after the war with the aid of the League of Nations and of friendly states, and particularly with that of our ally Great Britain, each one of you will also have his duty to perform and his rights to hold. To that end, we will perfect our institutions, we will modernise our administration and we will develop the best possible relations with other peoples, and improve our commerce, agriculture, industry and education. In an Ethiopia that is free and prosperous we wish to see citizens who are free, equal, united and enlightened.

This better destiny of Ethiopia rests in the hands of her hardy children. Therefore both big and small, young and old, united in spirit and determination, we have for our chief task the extirpation of the enemy from our soil.

People of Ethiopia!

Be worthy of and grateful for the aid which Great Britain brings us today. The English wish to crush the power of our common enemy and to restore our complete independence. They do not covet our territory. Whether you meet British officers or British soldiers, receive them as your friends and your liberators. They are for every one of you brothers in arms and guests who carry with them a blessing.

Long live Ethiopia, free and independent!

Long live Great Britain!

Given in Hamle 1, 1932, in the Year of Grace (8 July 1940).

NOTE.—*Hamasiën, Akelegousai, Seräe, Beni Amer, Habab and Mensah* are the provinces of Eritrea, to which the Emperor in this pamphlet put forward a guarded claim.

Appendix C

LETTER FROM FITORARI TAFFERE ZELLEKA OF BELAYA TO THE DISTRICT COMMISSIONER AT ROSEIRES. (I)

May it arrive to the honourable Hancock, District Commissioner of Roseires.

I send you my salutations saying world gladness and health, honour and thanks be with you.

As you said and wrote to me, saying "I herewith send you with Arbab Zagaye 16 men in all for safe conduct, amongst whom are Ato Ayele and Ato Makonnen, receive them and respect them," according to your word I have received them well and sent them on in peace.

Secondly, I am glad that Gerasmatch Alemayu and Gerasmatch Wolde Igezu have arrived in peace with their men for me, because Hassan Achmed guided them by a good road.

Thirdly, I have received by Ato Ayele and Ato Makonnen three hundred dollars, and now by Gerasmatch Alemayu and Gerasmatch Wolde Igezu three hundred dollars, totalling six hundred dollars, and 11 rifles with their ammunition.

Of two Martini rifles that can be loaded with one round, which my men brought to me with Arbab Zagaye, as one Martini was brought to me broken at the lower sling swivel, I gave to Hassan Achmed the broken one saying, "Take the broken one to be repaired," and kept the rifle that he held, thinking that the honourable Commissioner would not be disappointed. This I hope to be your will.

Please send—for many soldiers—coats and trousers, bags, water-bottles, belts, greatcoats, rifle screwdrivers, pull-throughs, oil in tins. Please do not keep back any of these things which I have written.

I inform you of one thing, please send for myself a coat and trousers which officers wear, good and specially made to fit me, good shoes, a good hat, and a watch.

Written at Belaya Negus Dawit, on 23 Nahasei in the Year of Grace 1932 (29 August 1940).

Signed and sealed, FITORARI TAFFERE ZELLEKA LIKU.

LETTER TO SAME ADDRESS. (II)

I am sending you 160 men in all. As you wrote me to send you many men in order to supply me with much rifles, much ammunition and much money, here they are. Therefore please send me at your discretion rifles from the new stock with numbers on the butt of the rifle. In the first lot that you sent me half were not numbered, therefore please send me this kind. Also kindly send me five European (i.e. fountain) pens and ink.

Secondly, I have to inform you what the Abyssinians desire, viz. the destruction by bombing of the following Italian forts, Gubba, Wanbera,

Dangila and Kwara. After bombing the above forts which are on gateways (i.e. passes), nobody will remain in the forts; they will be forced to abandon the forts and come out.

Also our Abyssinians desire: to bomb as soon as possible during this season the forts of Bahardar, Enjabara and Debra Markos. Please arrange to attack the above forts immediately.

As the war materials which you sent us by caravan are insufficient, it will be necessary to revictual us by aeroplane.

I want to notify you that we are starving for salt and corn, therefore please revictual us by aeroplanes. Also we want Abujedid (*cotton cloth*).

The Ethiopian warriors, Arbab Zagaye and Hassan Achmed are brave men, who helped their Government and their Flag. They have already risked their lives to open this gateway. They are trustworthy men and we must not let them go for the future.

I ask you to supply Arbab Zagaye with a new weapon with which he may die (*i.e. in defence of his country*).

Written at Belaya Negus Dawit, on 23 Nahasei in the Year of Grace 1932 (29 August 1940).

Seal of FITORARI TAFFERE ZELLEKA.

LETTER FROM DEDJASMATCH MANGASHA JAMBURIE OF GOJJAM TO THE DISTRICT COMMISSIONER AT ROSEIRES

(received at Roseires, 15 August 1940).

Greetings.

I am extremely glad to have seen the letter that you sent to Fitorari Taffere Zelleka and glad too that you have sent me via Metemma the letter of the Commander-in-Chief. I have sent many men and animals to receive rifles, ammunition and weapons of all kinds. At last the English Government is sending us help and we, the warriors of Ethiopia, will fight our way out of the rule of our enemies the Italians. They (*in Amharic the Dedjasmach uses the contemptuous form She*) are sitting surrounded in a few tiny hiding places. It is like this in Begemder and throughout Gojjam. But to drive our enemies from our country it is not only rifles and ammunition that are necessary. If we had 5 light guns and 100 machine-guns we could destroy the hopes of the enemy. The reason why I want the machine-guns is because those that I took from the enemy (and they were many) needed Liben (*i.e. Lebel*) and Minishir (*i.e. Mannlicher*) cartridges and I hadn't enough of them to chastise the enemy with. The power of Italy in Ethiopia is gradually getting weaker and weaker, and she has no strength at all. She thinks to herself, "I smashed Ethiopia and conquered her," and lyingly shows her flag hanging at the Customs Posts between England and Ethiopia, at Metemma, Gubba and Gore, but what she rules inside Ethiopia does not amount to a quarter of the country. Secondly, since I am the door for anyone coming from Metemma to Belaya and Gojjam, I would recommend that you give no rifles or ammunition to anyone without my signature, lest they receive them and give them to the Italians. Thirdly, since our men in Belaya are very strong and the country is hilly and full of narrow passes, the

Italians have never been able to get into it, from the first time that they came into Ethiopia until today. The country is clear of them. Since Belaya is close to Roseires and to Metemma, and so as to speed up our work and encourage our men, let someone important come from the English Government to Belaya and choose out an aeroplane landing place. Once that has been done no other difficulty remains. Until then let everything be received via Fitorari Taffere Zelleka, and I myself will go on sending to you.

DEJASMATCH MANGASHA JAMBURIE.

10 *July* 1940.

Appendix D

LETTER FROM A FORMER EMPLOYE OF THE BRITISH CONSULATE, DANGILA, SENT TO KHARTOUM WITH A CONVOY FOR ARMS

To my master Major Cheesman:

I bow low at your feet asking after your health and bringing you my greetings. I was overjoyed to get news of you. The Italians were all around me and prevented me from coming to you, but I refused to loose the cord (*i.e. deny my faith*), and have been fighting until now. Thank God I am still alive. But now since my mother my master's news has reached us our hearts have become full and we have gone from strength to strength.

As for me, I wanted to come to you, my mother and my master, and thought to cross over to English territory, but my mother the Government's servants said to me, "He is about to come to you, why tire yourself?" so I stayed here. And now, until God satisfies my longing by bringing us together, I have written and sent you this letter.

I am your servant Balambaras Marra Wandim who used to live at Agunte. As proof of this (1) I am the one who used to keep the key of the storehouse, (2) when you went to your country I am the one to whom you said, "choose out three things from my stuff that your heart desires and take them," (3) I am the one to whom you gave the big saw. And above all this I am the one who accompanied you and your lady to the Awash and to whom you said, "Shall I take you with me to my country?"

Because I live in the wilds I want a shotgun to hunt with and to get food, and please do me a kindness so that my men do not bring trouble on me by coming back to me with fever when the clouds start to go round. I have sent my brother Ayichaw. Please do me your kindness.

BALAMBARAS MARRA WANDIM.

ZIBIST,

19 Tazaz 1933 (27 December 1940).

Appendix E

LETTER FROM THE PATRIOT CHIEF LIJ BELAI
ZELLEKA TO RAS HAILU TEKLA HAIMANOT
ON THE LATTER'S ARRIVAL IN GOJJAM

(Small seal with effigy of St. George)

May it be known to my lord H.H. Ras Hailu, son of the Negus Tekla Haimanot.

I send my respectful greetings, hoping that the Saviour of the world will grant you health.

On 5 Taezaz (14 December) I received your letter dated 1 Taezaz (10 December) and signed H.H. Ras Hailu Tekla Haimanot, in which you inform me that you have arrived well at Debra Markos on 8 December and that your coming is for the salvation of our country. I am very glad to hear this news.

May God be thanked that He has granted you the grace of passing from the year of St. John to that of St. Mark, and that He has made you come to us for the salvation of our country.

Your Highness! Gojjam has been destroyed chiefly by those who once were of your following. Even now the Italians have brought you with the intention of making use of you as their guide to exterminate all the remainder of the people and the country. It would have been a good thing if the Italians had at the least brought you in the first days when they aggressively invaded the country. It seems to me that having up to now acted as guide in the countries of Shoa and the Gallas, and after having seen the destruction of the people and provinces of Ethiopia, you have perhaps come here now to show the way and have your own country destroyed. Otherwise, if you have really come on our behalf to give us our independence, I for my part am ready with my warriors to fight on and destroy the enemy of Ethiopia.

Your Highness! The country and I are yours. But inasmuch as we are yours, if as we have heard has been done already in Shoa and among the Gallas, you have come with the intention of driving us one against the other with deceptions; I shall abandon your country and retire to the desert to resist like a man with my warriors for the independence and the honour of my country, and I shall so bear myself that my history shall be written in Europe. After having laboured for history and knowing that great events are on the march, it is not my intention to help the Italian Fascist soldiers, nor to stand before the Italian authorities and suffer their reproaches.

Regarding the coming of His Majesty, I inform you of the following: His Majesty has written me several times and I have received his letters. I have also received several documents which prove the losses inflicted recently on the Italian Fascist soldiers in the regions of Metemma and Gallabat; documents which I am sending you so that you can examine

them. My intention henceforth is to act in co-operation with others so that we may pass firm and united from slavery to independence. You will certainly know the contents of the proclamation dropped by aeroplanes on 5 Taczaz (14 December), the night between Saturday and Sunday.

May Ethiopia live eternally with her warriors in her independence!
Long live Great Britain!

(Seal) BELAI ZELLEKA, venger of the blood of Ethiopia.



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Appendix F

LETTER ADDRESSED TO H.E. PIETRO FRANCA,
DIRECTOR OF POLITICAL AFFAIRS, ADDIS
ABABA, BY AN ITALIAN OFFICIAL IN DEBRA
MARKOS

DEBRA MARKOS,

2 January 1941.

DEAR FRANCA,

Here is a partial appreciation of the situation and certain proposals which I dare not express to H.E. Nasi (*i.e. General Nasi, C.O. Western Command, Gondar*) as I fear they far exceed the programme that he has decided on.

1. The bulk of the rebels, though they are disposed to respect Ras Hailu, have no intention of submitting to the Government either because they are completely hostile to our system of Government or because they prefer at the present juncture to wait on events and not to compromise themselves.

2. I am convinced that Ras Hailu will only achieve success if we admit him to an autonomy, largely formal, in the performance of his duties, so that he appears, in his dealings with the rebel chiefs, the real arbiter of the situation in Gojjam—by acting as the authorised intermediary between us and the people of Gojjam.

3. The best way to reinforce the Ras' respect for us and to assure him at the same time the necessary conditions to enable him to be useful to us would be to promise him some big title, e.g. Negus of Gojjam, when he succeeds in winning over to his service at least 15,000 rebels.

4. This assurance would enable the Ras to study, with the chief rebel leaders, a plan of common action whose object should be the setting up of a new organisation; which by granting offices and salaries and distributing the available forces would effectively prevent enemy armed formations and propagandists from entering Gojjam.

5. It can be seen that any agreement with the rebel chiefs would involve the withdrawal of some of our garrisons and Residencies (*District Commissioners*), but the Government must always maintain direct control on the principal line of communications from Tana to the Blue Nile.

6. Ras Hailu will once more ask for arms, and in my opinion his requests should be met, within certain limits; he has in fact to deal with rebel chiefs who base their authority on the possession of a certain number of light and heavy machine-guns. Ras Hailu has asked me timidly if it would not be possible to give him four pieces of artillery. I think that he would be pleased to have them even if they don't shoot, for reasons of prestige.

7. In my opinion it is better to promise him some high title, even that of Negus, than to grant requests for arms, except those absolutely necessary for reasons of prestige.

8. Should the Ministry and the Government-General accept the above ideas it would certainly be useful if some other great chief in whom we have confidence (? Ras Seyyum) should assume responsibility for the situation across the Nile, especially in Amhara Sahint and Borena, with titles and authority equal to those of Ras Hailu.

9. Any delay in taking up a clear and definite position with regard to the above problems may later expose us to an extremely difficult situation.

As things are, I shall leave for Bichenna with Ras Hailu on Thursday, 9th instant.

Yrs.

(signature illegible).

N.B.—At present the Ras is aiming more at arms than titles!

PARALLEL PROCLAMATION TO THE PEOPLE OF GOJJAM, ISSUED AT ABOUT THE SAME DATE IN DEBRA MARKOS

About three weeks ago H.H. Ras Hailu Tekla Haimanot returned amongst you, welcomed by the applause of the people of Gojjam. The Italian Government wanted this event which you desired to take place as a new step along the road by which we are now travelling for the complete pacification of the country; with respect for the rights of the natives, their religion and their customs, as it is written in the laws made by Italy for the Government of Ethiopia. This path has been long and difficult. The same H.H. Ras Hailu has said that to get the honey one must drive the bees away. And many bees, to tell the truth, have made the work difficult for us; and you, O people of Gojjam, know it. You know it because you have tried to understand our efforts for the good of Ethiopia, you have tried to judge of the importance of the work which, like a giant, Italy has raised to the sky, for your present and future prosperity: roads which furrow mountains and plains; immense bridges which unite the banks of your rivers; intensification of commerce and agriculture; roads towards the seas and ports to the outer world. Besides these works Italy has begun to assess your personal capacities, and in order that you may soon be able to make use of the great works which she has given to you for your welfare, she has placed between you and the Government a great chief, descended from the dynasty of Gojjam, who understands well the work of Italy for the civilisation and prosperity of Gojjam.

PEOPLE OF GOJJAM!

We were well on our way to reaching the goal. But behold a foreign people, continuing a subtle propaganda long since begun, has laid out its snares for you. In your lands where milk and honey flow, surrounded by holy Ghion (*the old Gojjami word for the Ethiopian Abbai, our Blue Nile*) which God has given you as a boundary on every side, this people has scarcely ceased from poisoning you with the honey of its words. . . . And of those among you who poisoned by propaganda say, "It is for the independence and liberty of the people—how wonderful!" are there not some who while thinking of Ethiopian independence would be disposed to shout, "Long live England!" Are there not some already disposed to give these barbarians the milk and honey of their own country, and the

waters of Tana and Ghion, while knowing that these treasures would go to benefit the foreigner and not to benefit Ethiopia and her people?

PEOPLE OF GOJJAM!

Arouse yourselves. Tear asunder the veil which hides the truth from you and listen to your chief H.H. Ras Hailu, who brings with him the fortune of Negus Tekla Haimanot, and who in every way will be able to satisfy the aspiration of the people.

Appendix G

NEWS SUMMARY PUBLISHED IN ERITREA IN MARCH 1941

At moments in war there comes a pause in the struggle, when one side can speak to the other above the sound of the guns. Such a moment has come in the battle of Eritrea.

We are not today giving you propaganda pure and simple. We are doing something original in warfare. We are publishing in Italian a summary of our own Military Intelligence, extracted from our staff files; so that Officer can make himself understood to Officer without the exaggeration associated with the press, and so that you in Eritrea and Ethiopia may know by what means Graziani was totally defeated in Libya.

This greatly affects you. If there had been no British victory in the Western Desert, the troops would have not been released, that obliged you to withdraw from Kassala and then turned your retreat into a rout. And in long term strategy the defeat of Graziani seals your fate.

This is how it happened.

In September 1940, after a long period of desert skirmishes and raids, Graziani launched his offensive across the frontier of Egypt, and advanced along the coast to Sidi Barrani and inland to Sofafi. Here, for reasons of logistic, he stopped. Graziani issued a communique on this advance, which for its falsity, dishonoured the name of a distinguished soldier. Amongst other things, he claimed to have destroyed fifty per cent. of the British tanks in Egypt. In fact his contact with our forces had been of the slightest. We had withdrawn rapidly in front of him, not being strong enough to meet him so far from our Egyptian railhead at Mersa Matruh.

Graziani made a great mistake, when he did not pursue his advance at this moment; you also made a great mistake, when you did not at this time press into the Sudan. We can say no more than that the defence of the Nile would have taxed our powers.

During the period September–November 1940, Graziani multiplied his means and his troops in forward areas preparatory to further advance into Egypt, planned, we believe, for the end of December. He constructed roads, massed dumps, laid a pipe line, pushed forward his Divisions. On his front he laid out a fan-like spread of camps, between the sea and Sofafi. This line was maintained largely by his Libyans and the mechanised Raggruppamento under the command of General Melletti. But he was never able to establish an unbroken chain of camps to Sofafi. In November we established a definite superiority over his patrols in skirmishes and at the fight at Hellgat (November 19) prevented him from making the camp which would have closed the gap between Nubeiwa (Maletti) and Sofafi.

Meanwhile large reinforcements were arriving for our forces in the Middle East, via the Mediterranean and the Red Sea without loss. This revealed the comparative weakness of the Italian navy and the falsity of

Fascist propaganda, which had pretended the destruction of British Naval power. Among the implements of war delivered at this time to Egypt were the celebrated "I" tanks, which invulnerable to your anti-tank weapons, played so important a part in the offensive to follow. At a moment suggested to us by the disagreements in your High Command, because of their defeat at the hands of the Greeks, followed by the loss of KORITSA and ARGYROCASTRO, the Cairo Command decided to strike Graziani.

At this moment the Italian positions in Libya were as follows:

Nubeiwa: Maletti Raggruppamento.

Tummar: 2 Libyan Division.

Maktla: 1 Libyan Division.

Sidi Barrani: 4 (3 January) CCNN Division and XXIII Corps.

Buqbuq: part of 2 (28 October) CCNN Division.

Coming up to:

Buqbuq: 64 (Catanzaro) Division.

Bir Sofafi: 63 (Cirene) Division.

Solum Area: rest of 2 CCNN Division and 62 (Marmarica) Div.

Bardia: 1 (23 March) CCNN Div. and XXI Corps.

Tobruk: 61 (Sirte) Div. and XXII Corps.

Graziani was aware that we were going to attack, but did not know the date, and misjudged the direction. He foresaw a frontal thrust at Buqbuq from the south-east, which he could easily pinch off by counter-attack, from his camps on the flanks of such a move, Nubeiwa and Sofafi. In fact on the morning of the 9th December, Indian troops and "I" tanks attacked Maletti at Nubeiwa from an original angle, exploiting the gap that the Italian command had been unable to close. The unexpected attack came from neither the south nor the south-west, but from the north-west, that is, from within the Italian system. Nubeiwa was quickly overrun, Maletti killed and his Raggruppamento made prisoner with all their material.

Meanwhile the R.A.F. launched a general attack on all the aerodromes in Cyrenaica and the principal aerodromes in Tripolitania; and the battle fleet bombarded Sidi Barrani and Maktla.

Special groups of Infantry marked off Sofafi and Maktla, and British troops were concentrated to support the Indian right. The British armoured forces moved up independently west of Sidi Barrani and cut the Buqbuq track. The Indians now launched their second attack on Tummar camps and took 2 Libyan Division and the 4 (3 January) CCNN Division prisoner.

On the 10th December Maktla surrendered. Most of 1 Libyan Division had already fallen back on Sidi Barrani. The R.A.F. continued its assault on aerodromes, and also attacked Sofafi camp on the escarpment and the coastal road. Strong British patrols were moved west of Buqbuq, cutting the retreat of Buqbuq garrison to Libya.

The next day Sidi Barrani and Buqbuq were captured. The whole of 1 Libyan Division, the command and staff of the Group of Libyan Divisions and the 231 Legion of the 2 (28 October) CCNN Division were taken prisoner after stout resistance by the CCNN artillery. On

the same day three-quarters of 64 (Catanzaro) Division, coming up from Sollum to Buqbuq in normal relief, surrendered to a British armoured Division without a fight. The rest of the CCNN Division got away to Bardia.

Meanwhile in the south the 63 (Cirene) Division which had been an idle spectator of events in Sofafi, decided to retire along the escarpment, abandoning in its camp, all its store and equipment. This pusillanimous movement was detected by the R.A.F., which concentrated its guns and bombs upon a difficult line of retreat. The casualties of the Division were heavy, and it swept before it in the same herded press of withdrawal important elements of the 62 (Marmarica) Division. Undoubtedly the demoralisation communicated by these two Divisions contributed largely to the fall of Bardia, which they eventually reached on about 15 December.

On the 14th December British armoured vehicles were astride the Bardia-Tobruk road and rendered the reinforcement of Bardia or its evacuation impossible.

Next day Sollum, Capuzzo and the frontier forts were occupied and a pause followed (as now in East Africa) when the British command prepared for the assault on Bardia. Australian troops were brought before the town, in which there now were the whole of the 1 (23 March) Division, two thirds of the 2 (28 October) and 62 and 63 Divisions, one-quarter of 64 Division with elements of G.A.F. and the H.Q. of XXIII Corps.

The rest of December was spent by the R.A.F. in reconnaissance, and in occupation of enemy aerodromes, such as El Adem. At El Adem 87 destroyed Italian aircraft were found on the ground, evidence of the success of the R.A.F. offensive. Further evidence was provided by the fact that from now onward, there was no resistance from the Italian Air Force; on the 25th January, however, in the neighbourhood of Derna, German dive bombers made their first appearance and caused us some casualties.

A new air and naval offensive was launched against Bardia at the beginning of January; and on the 3rd January the Australian Division led by "I" tanks advanced through Bardia defences. By nightfall they were holding a line nine miles long and about two miles within the outer defences. Large group surrenders had begun, and in the following two days the whole garrison had given itself up, that is, the whole of 1 CCNN Division and the best part of three other Divisions. By error we announced at the time, the capture of General Bergonzoli, commanding XXIII Army Corps; he had, however, escaped in a motor-boat. Other generals, later captured by our troops, tried to escape by foot over the desert to Tobruk.

After a pause for reorganisation, Tobruk was assaulted by tanks and the Australian Division on the 23rd January, and fell within thirty hours.

The Royal Air Force and battleships of the Royal Navy co-operated fully in the capture, which yielded into our hands the entire 6 (Sirte) Division Corps troops and elements of G.A.F., and the command of the XXII Corps.

On 27 January our mechanised Cavalry were at Derna. From Derna, which Graziani did not defend, General Wavell despatched the mass of his forces in two columns. One, which consisted entirely of armoured units, was sent south to Mekili where it forced the withdrawal of the armoured Division commanded by General Babini. The other, of Australian troops, took the main road BENGHAZI, where General Bergonzoli was now in command, with the 60 (Sabrata) Division and the H.Q. of the XX Army Corps.

By a brilliant march from Melili the English tanks covered 250 kilometres in thirty hours to cut the road between Benghazi and Gadabia at a point 45 kilometres north of Gadabia. At the same time Bergonzoli and Babini evacuated Benghazi, which was entered immediately by the Australians, and tried to escape to Tripoli along the coastal road.

An action was fought for five hours north of Gadabia on 7 February, which ended in the complete defeat and surrender of the Italian Forces. Sixty-one Italian tanks were destroyed and 34 captured. Among the 15,000 prisoners taken were more than 75 per cent. of the 60 (Sabrata) and the Babini armoured Divisions, General Bergonzoli and seven other Generals.

In this way, in an offensive of two months, Graziani has lost 10 infantry divisions, the Babini armoured division and the Malletti Group, over 130,000 prisoners, over 300 tanks and over 1,200 guns of all types (including anti-tank and anti-aircraft). We have counted on the occupied aerodromes of Cyrenaica the wreckage of more than 300 Italian military machines.

Our own casualties have been less than 2,000 dead and wounded. And our material loss infinitesimal. We are at El Agheila on the boundary of Tripolitania and Cyrenaica, having won the most spectacular military victory ever won in Africa.

Graziani has four divisions left for the defence of Tripolitania: the 17 (Pavia), the 25 (Bologna), the 27 (Brescia) and the 55 (Savona). Two of them have lost their artillery in Cyrenaica. It is doubtful on what line he will be able to stand.

**BANDERACHIN, NUMBER XVIII, PUBLISHED
THROUGHOUT ETHIOPIA IN FEBRUARY 1941**

On 20 January His Majesty the Emperor Haile Sellassie the First, accompanied by the Crown Prince and the Duke of Harrar, by the Itchegi, Ras Kassa, Dedjasmatch Makonnen Endalkatchu and Dedjasmatch Adefressu, by his delegate to the League of Nations Ato Lorenzo Tazaz, and by his principal secretary Ato Wolde Giorgis, by the chief of his Imperial Guard, Kenyasmatch Mokria, by two powerful Ethiopian and English armies equipped with war material superior to the Italian, crossed the frontier of the Sudan and Ethiopia and entered on his own.

A new book in the history of Ethiopia has been written; therefore we rejoice in the tender mercies of our God and of Jesus Christ and we give thanks before the Divine Throne. God our Father, who turned His face so long from us because of our sins, has not forgotten Ethiopia in her wretchedness; as the thunderbolt rends the tree, so He prepares to strike with His wrath the tyrant who oppressed us.

With the aid of England who has driven the armies of the cruel Graziani into the Libyan sea, with this aid the Emperor as he crossed the frontier took an oath by his name and by the name of Menelik to purge the Italian from the sacred soil of Ethiopia, free for two thousand years before the Italian stranger came.

Now the Italians are confounded in the falsehoods that they have uttered. First they said that our Emperor was dead, or that he lived in England a life of dissolute forgetfulness, caring nothing for his charges, the Ethiopian people. But here is the Emperor in your midst: all of you can come to see him, to kiss his feet, to receive forgiveness if you have failed in your duty to your country and recognition if you risked your lives for her. Secondly, the Italians said that they would join Ethiopia to Libya with the aid of Graziani, and so save themselves from the English blockade; but here are the very armies who have defeated and dishonoured Graziani. Thirdly, they said that the English wished to impose upon Ethiopia a religion not her own; but here are the Itchegi himself and his priests to teach you and to pray for your salvation; these are priests who have been more faithful to the orthodox religion of their fathers than any of the fat false Abunas dressed up in bishops' robes and weighed down by the thalers of the Italians. Fourthly, they said that the English would steal our country from us, as indeed the Italians have done; but our Emperor enters his country with an agreement with the King of England guaranteeing the full independence of Ethiopia from today and English aid for her peaceful reconstruction.

The Emperor enters his country to bring Peace and Justice, to feed the hungry and clothe the ragged. Today is the day when all Ethiopians must rejoice, and when Ethiopia raises her hands to God. Today is the justification of the policy of our wise Emperor Haile Sellassie over many years.

Many of you will remember the war of 1935, and how the Italians entered our beloved country like bands of thieves and broke its independence. They came by force and guile. They bribed chiefs and men of power; against armies which had neither aircraft nor artillery, and many of whose soldiers were armed with sticks and spears, they used enormous armies equipped with machine-guns and cannon, bombs and gas. We did not know how cruel the Italians could be. Some thought that submission to them would be an easy thing. Many great men did not do their duty. The hand of brother was turned against brother. We were not united. We did not all listen to the voice of our Emperor Haile Sellassie. Also our friends, the English, did not then have the armies ready to support us, having in those days only an invincible fleet and air force to protect their Island and Empire. Though they stood by us, yet they were then unwilling to start a world war far more terrible than the war of 1935 in Ethiopia. The English are a race slow to anger; they wait their time, they are patient, they calculate the future; but their dignity is like that of the Lion which despising the Italian Jackal at the last, because of his importunities, breaks into mortal rage.

The Emperor Haile Sellassie knew all this. He was bound to England by the Pact of the League of Nations, which Italy had broken when she invaded Ethiopia. The Pact pledged all its signatories to aid one another when attacked. The Emperor knew that the aid which he could expect in 1935 and 1936 was not great but he trusted in the word of the English, which they do not break. For seven months the Ethiopian armies resisted; then they were defeated by the Italian bombs and gas, and the Emperor, seeing that to fight in the field with organised armies any longer would sacrifice unavailingly the blood of the subjects whom he loved, left Ethiopia to fight for her liberation for five hard years across the seas.

He wept as he crossed the frontier in May of 1935. He smiles as he crosses it today.

The Italians lied when they said that our Emperor Haile Sellassie went with much money from his country. He spent nearly all that he had to buy his country arms, and all that there remained to him to aid those wretched Ethiopians who were driven into foreign lands. It was only the kindness and love of the English people that sustained our Emperor in these sad hours. In one of their great warships of steel that today the Italians dare not face they carried him away from Djibouti. They took him to Jerusalem, where he prayed to the God of David to save His people; they took him to Geneva, where he pleaded for justice before the peoples of the whole world and told them of the unchristian cruelties of the Italians; and they took him to London, to work and organise the resurrection of his country at the hour when the English would be ready to strike.

Today that hour has come.

How wise was the decision of our King, to spare his people the miseries of war with great armies when the Italians were fresh, and before they had been exhausted by the English blockade and the Ethiopian guerrilla war, as they are now. How prudent he was to take sanctuary in Jerusalem and London, so that in his body an independent Ethiopia, however

small, should exist, a seed from which the flower of a new Ethiopia should spring when winter was over. Even as the prophet Isaiah has foretold, "Yet a remnant of the Lord shall return, and come with singing into Zion, and sorrow and sadness shall flee away."

Had our Emperor remained to be killed or made prisoner on the battlefield, we would not have had a Judge to come among us and deliver us. We would have stood still in our disunity and forgotten our independence. The sacred seed of Solomon would have been destroyed, and the Lion of Judah killed that must remain immortal.

He worked and prayed in the cold northern countries for four years, never forgetting his people. His life was austere and grave; he did not amuse himself as the Europeans do; probably many of his subjects even under the oppression of the Italians could be more happy than he was, for they could forget at times when they saw the natural beauty of their own country, forbidden to him, the misery of their brothers. They could forget the thousands of houses and hundreds of churches destroyed, the thousands of priests and people massacred without trial or question. For him there were no festivals or gaieties; only hard work, and tears very often.

But in 1940 England was prepared to crush Italy. At the end of the month of June the Emperor Haile Sellassie and his staff flew from England in a huge English aeroplane that can also float on water like a boat. They reached Khartoum in the Sudan in two days, and there the Emperor wrote to his chiefs and prepared his armies.

You, Ethiopians who have remained with the Italians, know how they boast and how vain they are. Whereas the English are silent, the Italians are always talking about themselves. This is natural, for only poor wares need advertisement, and it is only by buying them that the people find that they are poor. It is you who have bought the Italians, and now it is for you to examine your wares.

The Italians, relying on your ignorance of the English who are the greatest Empire in the world, have told you that the English are very rich, but no fighters, that they (not the Italians, who depend on an army of 200,000 Ethiopians to save their shivering bodies) fight only with other people's armies, and that they are effete. In token of this they promised you a short war against England, and after Maskal they swore that they would take the Sudan and Kenya, and join themselves in Egypt with the armies of Graziani.

What promises! What lies!

Throughout the season of the rains the unfortunate Ethiopian soldiers enlisted by force by the Italians were obliged to live on the deadly frontiers of the Sudan where many perished of fever and many from the English bombs and by surprise attacks by the English tanks and armoured cars. During that period the Italians went only one day's march across the frontier of Eritrea to take Kassala, and an hour's march across the frontier of Metemma to take Gallabat, and in the east they occupied a desert without cultivation or water in Somaliland. In all these places they left garrisons of Ethiopians to live in miserable conditions, without rest or meat or *berberri* (chillies), without the joy of their families and without the glory of advance and victory. For into

these worthless places, in spite of all their promises of Khartoum, Gedaref, Port Sudan, was the farthest that the Italians could go.

After Maskal, what did they do? Four months of fighting weather have passed and the Italians have not gone forward. Rather they have gone backward. They have lost Gallabat again and been driven out of Metemma by the violence and endless stocks of ammunition of the English artillery. They have been proved cowards and liars. They dare not advance against the Emperor Haile Sellassie and his English armies. They know that if once the battle is pitched in the open all their troops who hate them will desert them and join their own King, and their armies will melt away. They know that their roads are unsafe because of the attacks of the loyal Ethiopians with the English and explosives. So they are terrified and they have lost all hope. In their cowardice and panic they turn on the civil population to burn their crops. Is that the work of a good Government, to whom the people should be as children to guard and educate and save?

But during this time it was their rightful Emperor who prepared to educate and save his people. In these months he trained new battalions of Ethiopians on the English pattern in the Sudan and Kenya, and issued arms, money, clothes and food to loyal Ethiopians. At the same time the English Air Force, sparing the civil population, bombed without ceasing the Italian aerodromes and camps, destroying their aeroplanes, workshops and petrol; and the English Navy has completed the ring round Italian Ethiopia to stop all food and petrol and new arms and ammunition from coming in. The Italian Navy, being feeble, did not dare to face the English Navy. The Italian Air Force since the war began in 1940 has only carried out a quarter of the raids that the English has done, and has done no damage in the Sudan.

As a spider spins the web before he sucks the blood of the fly, so the English blockade is waiting to kill the Italians in Ethiopia. They are losing everything—petrol, sugar, meat, wheat, bombs, aeroplanes, guns, shells, rifle ammunition. But that is not all that the English have done, nor all that the Italians have lost.

They have lost control of Gojjam because of the English mission of officers sent there in August 1940 to make the arrangements for the Emperor's return, and because of the unswerving loyalty of Dedjasmatches Nagash and Mangash and Lij Belai Zelleka. They have lost control of Begemder and Chako and Kamant, because of the loyal chiefs and the aid that the English have given them.

But above all they have lost Libya, and the armies of Graziani in which they placed all their hope of salvation.

You yourselves know now, for even the Italians in their terror are beginning to tell the truth, that on December 9 the English armies in Egypt, under General Wavell, struck Graziani a mortal blow. In three days' fighting they smashed the Italian invasion of Egypt and took over 40,000 prisoners. Then they drove onward into Libya and on 2 January they attacked the great Italian fortress and port of Bardia. This they captured after two days' fighting, with 40,000 more prisoners, but most of the Italian generals escaped in boats of a small size, being cowards.

Finally on 22 January they attacked the Italians' chief naval base at Tobruk and took it in a day and a half, with 20,000 prisoners.

Thus, in fighting which has lasted less than two months the army of Graziani has been completely destroyed and Libya has been left without defence. Graziani has lost over 100,000 men, over 200 tanks and over 1,000 pieces of artillery. He who was the tyrant of Ethiopia, and he who the Italians now in Ethiopia believed would save them has been utterly destroyed. Formerly he had fifteen separate armies, called Divisions, each between 10,000 and 15,000 strong; now ten of these have been taken prisoner by the English armies of Egypt, and the rest are weak as women because they have no tanks nor artillery to meet the terrible English tanks which no Italian gun can penetrate.

Because of this decisive English victory and also because the Greeks had driven the Italians right out of Greece, which the Italians had wickedly invaded, and were pushing the Italians back into the sea on that side, Marshal Badoglio, the head of the Italian Army, and Admiral Cavagnari, the head of the Italian Navy, both lost confidence in the man whom they used to call their Duce, Mussolini, and deserted him. When he ordered them, they refused to fight. The demoralisation of the Italian Army was so great that in Libya a whole Italian Division of regular soldiers, 14,000 strong, surrendered to 50 English tanks in which there were only 200 men, without firing a shot.

So Mussolini was defeated on two fronts, in Greece and Libya at the same time, and all his soldiers were quarrelling with loud voices among each other, as is the custom of the Italians when things are going badly for them. This was the moment when the Emperor Haile Sellassie, with his English military advisers, decided to strike and destroy the Italians in Ethiopia. The Emperor and the English wait a long time before they strike, but their blow is sure.

In the third week of January His Majesty the Emperor Haile Sellassie therefore crossed the frontier of Ethiopia into the Gojjam, and there established his government in the land of his ancestors, and raised the war flag of the Ethiopian Empire with its badge of the slaughter of the Dragon by St. George. As he is a loving father of his people and nourishes no thoughts of personal revenge, his first act was to publish a decree which will be called the Golden Decree, in which he forgives all his enemies whether they are enemies by force or by choice, and calls his people to his side in the sacred struggle to restore the ancient liberties of Ethiopia.

In the same week the English armies of the Sudan, English, Indian and Sudanese troops carrying with them powerful artillery and innumerable tanks, protected by an aviation second to none in the whole world, launched their long-planned attack on the Italian army of Eritrea. In one day they won back Kassala and conquered Sabderat and Tessenci. The Italian in his alarm did not stop to fight but fled before them. He abandoned all his prepared positions and his fortresses, Om Hagger, the Wolkait and Tseggede, Aicota, Keru, Biacia and Barentu. At Agordat he tried to stand and he was smashed utterly by the British guns and bombs. His army of Askaris, who had long been receiving letters from His Majesty Haile Sellassie, told him that they would fight no more for him,

and abandoned him. Thus, in ten days' battle the whole of Eritrea was laid open to the English and the once proud Italian army became a dust of stragglers, blown to the corners of Ethiopia, seeking their homes.

This is no propaganda that we are writing to you. This is the sober truth. You can read it either in this paper, or if you prefer it in the sombre faces of the Italians. Are they happy? Do they laugh as they used to do? Their Empire in Libya is in utter ruins, their old colony of Eritrea is lost to them, their hope is gone, they await their end like the criminal beside the gibbet when the Judge passes sentence.

And this is the sentence.

That the Italian Empire is found to be made of straw, and the English Empire to be made of steel; that justice is with the English, who are blessed by God, and injustice with the Italians, who are under the devil's curse.

That the Italians are to be ruthlessly driven out of Ethiopia, Eritrea and Somaliland, and that the full independence of Ethiopia is to be re-established as it was before 1936, under her Emperor Haile Sellassie the First.

That the Italians shall never again be allowed to enter Ethiopia.

That the English shall aid Ethiopia to modernise her institutions, perfect her government and enlarge her wealth without taking for themselves an acre of her territory or an iota of her sovereignty.

People of Ethiopia!

In this book we have told to you the history of the last five years, and how Ethiopia under her great Emperor fell to rise again. This is a miracle for which God must be humbly thanked. Never before has a King come back to his country in this way.

People of Ethiopia!

Keep this book as a precious thing, to show to your friends and explain it to them, and to hand down to your children and children's children. As a light lit on a hill gives the signal for battle, so does this book blazon out the recovery of your liberty, than which there is nothing more precious in the whole world.

Appendix 1

HOP, SKIP, AND A JUMP: OR THE ROAD TO DAMASCUS

The following three letters were written by Ras Seyyum, the leading prince of Tigre, Northern Ethiopia:

(I) *To Doctor Saruppi:*

To my honoured friend Doctor Saruppi. I present my greetings to you. How is your health keeping? Thank God, I am well. May our powerful Italian Government keep you in peace, and satisfy us by bringing us together again in life.

Seal of RAS SEYYUM.

19 December 1940.

(II) *To the Emperor Haile Sellassie I:*

To Haile Sellassie, Elect of God, Emperor of Ethiopia; Your Majesty! I bow before you in greeting. Thanks be to God, we are well. God working out His work of kindness has fulfilled the word which He spoke by man's mouth that within five years He would show mercy to Ethiopia.

And now may God, the doer of all, satisfy you by enabling you to set up the standard of Ethiopia now that you have returned to your country.

SEYYUM MANGASHA YOHANNIS.

8 April 1941.

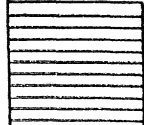
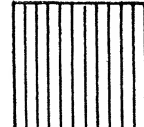
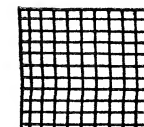
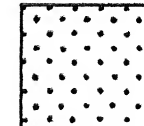
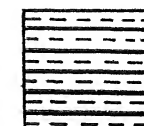
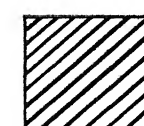
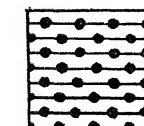
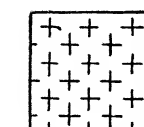
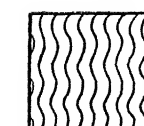
(III) *To Ras Kassa:*


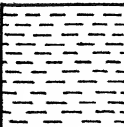
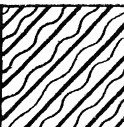

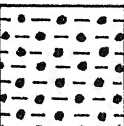
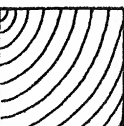

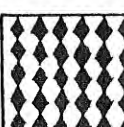
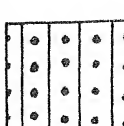
How have you kept since we separated? Thank God, we are well—apart from our longing for you. Even though we were not separated in thought, we were unable to speak face to face or to write to each other, and my sorrow at this was boundless. But since by the will of the kind God the hindering yoke has been taken away, my joy is limitless at my ability to write you this letter.

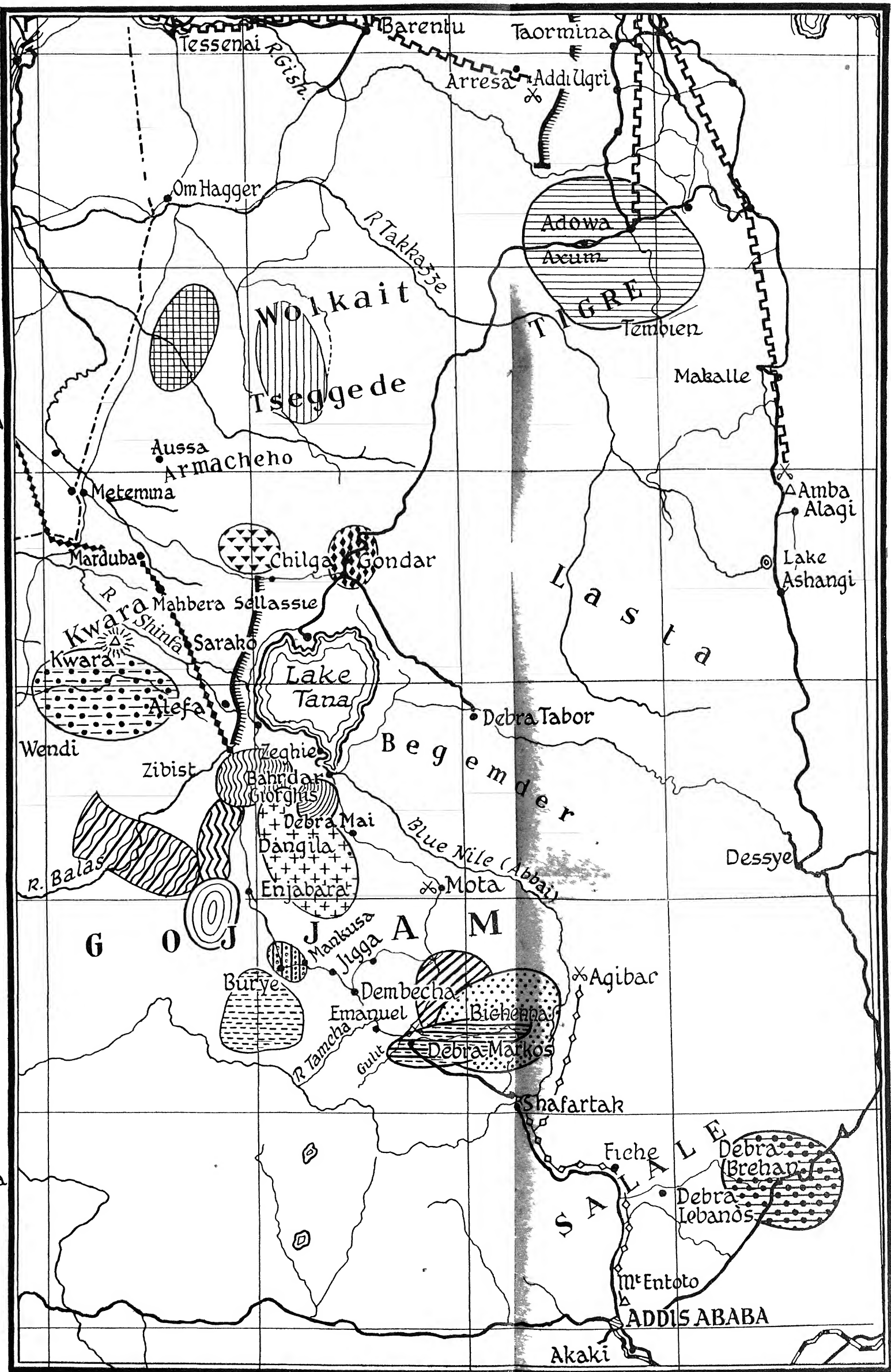
I have recently returned from a visit to the British Government authorities at Asmara. You will know that no man will be happier than I when the flag of Ethiopia, the sign of our fathers and grandfathers, has been planted again in its country.

SEYYUM.

8 April 1941.

-  Ras Seyyum
-  Dej Adane
-  Fit. Misfin Redda
-  Lij. Belai Zelleka
-  Ras Hailu
-  Lij Hailu Bilau
-  Ras Ababa Aragai
-  Dej. Mangasha
-  Fit. Ayelu Makonnen

-  Fit Zelleka Birru and Ken Darrassu
-  Dej. Nagash
-  Fit. Taffere Zelleka
-  Brothers of Fit Taffere Zelleka
-  Fit. Werku
-  Lij Aberra
-  Ger Redda
-  Dej. Ayelu Birru
-  Dej Mamu



WESTERN ABYSSINIA : Showing zones of revolt under Ethiopian Chiefs.

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